

Astley Primary School

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

At Astley Primary School we aim to provide equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of academic and social education. Our Single Equality Scheme is based on the core values expressed in the aims of the schools as stated in the schools' brochures. This scheme reflects the principles of the Norfolk Learning Statement and has been drawn up in accordance with legislation and reference to documentation regarding racial, disability and gender equalities.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and The Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality (2002) requires schools to:

- ! promote racial equality
- ! foster good relations
- ! eliminate unlawful racial discriminations

The Disability Discrimination Act of 2005 requires schools to formulate a Disability Equality Scheme to "promote equality of opportunity." It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils", issued by DfES in July 2002.

The Act defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes 'hidden' impairments, such as mental illness, dyslexia, autism including Asperger's syndrome, speech & language – spoken and written, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diabetes, epilepsy or severe allergies. Substantial means "more than minor or trivial" and long-term means lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. Between 7% and 12% of pupils nationally are deemed to fall into this category i.e. approx. *** pupils at Astley.

Under the gender equality duty, which was introduced by the Equality Act 2006, all schools are obliged to publish a Gender Equality Scheme and take action to:

- ! eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- ! promote equality of opportunity between men and women, boys and girls

From September 2007 schools also have a duty to promote and contribute to community cohesion.

At Astley Primary School we fully support the vision of Norfolk Children's Services, namely:

- ! ***We believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future.***

We also endorse the Norfolk Inclusion definition that says:

- ! ***Inclusion is the process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life.***

The Access Plan of Astley Primary School already lays out the plans to increase access for disabled pupils in line with the planning duties in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Our vision is to strive to continually improve our ability to provide the highest quality education and opportunities for all.

We aim:

- ! to encourage everyone to lead a healthy, happy and safe life regardless of social, economic and cultural backgrounds;
- ! to celebrate enjoyment and achievement;
- ! to make the school a positive contributor to the local community.

AIMS

The overall aim of this scheme is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to

- ❖ eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment: promote equality of opportunity;
- ❖ promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

Through the Single Equality Scheme the school seeks to ensure that no member of the school community, or any other person through their contact with the school, receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependants, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, where the person lives or spent convictions.

The principles of this scheme apply to all members of the extended school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers, visitors and community members.

A COHESIVE COMMUNITY

Astley Primary School serves rural communities in North Norfolk:

- ❖ Astley's catchment area encompasses the villages of Melton Constable, Briston, Hindolveston and a number of smaller communities over an area in excess of 40 square miles.

We also welcome children from out of catchment where intake numbers allow. Our school community contains pupils from a wide range of social backgrounds of mainly white ethnic origin. The majority speak English with a very small minority of pupils who speak another language as first language. We welcome all members of the community onto our roll.

In order to achieve a cohesive community, we will need to:

- ❖ Promote understanding and engagement between communities
- ❖ Encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community
- ❖ Understand the needs and hopes of all our communities.
- ❖ Tackle discrimination
- ❖ Increase life opportunities for all
- ❖ Ensure the curriculum explores and addresses issues of diversity.

PUPIL ATTAINMENT AND PROGRESS

These schools expect the highest possible standards. Staff have high expectations of all pupils and continually challenge them to reach higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement. We will monitor and analyse pupil performance by ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational need and take account of socio-economic circumstances. Any identified disparities will be addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION – TEACHING AND LEARNING

All staff ensure the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all contributions are valued. Positive steps are taken to include pupils who may otherwise be marginalized. We take account of pupils' experiences and starting points and are responsive to pupils' different learning styles. All pupils are consulted about their learning.

Pupil grouping is planned and varied to reflect the requirements of learners and their social development needs.

Our teaching styles include collaborative learning. All pupils will be encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks. Staff encourage pupils to become independent and assist them in taking responsibility for the management of their own learning and behaviour. We believe that self-assessment is a teaching-learning strategy, and we will provide all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress.

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION – CURRICULUM AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

The schools provide an appropriate curriculum which is inclusive of all pupils. We will monitor and evaluate its effectiveness through target setting and attainment analysis. All pupils participate in the mainstream curriculum of the school. The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- ❖ boys and girls
- ❖ pupils learning English as an additional language
- ❖ pupils from minority ethnic groups, including Gypsies and Travellers
- ❖ pupils who are gifted and talented
- ❖ pupils with special educational needs
- ❖ pupils with a disability
- ❖ pupils who are in public care
- ❖ pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils.

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION – GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

We actively promote good personal and community relations and recognise diversity as having a positive role to play within the school. All staff are expected to foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among boys and girls from all social groups and range of abilities. Staff challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities. Our pastoral support takes account of any differences, special educational needs and disability. The school provides appropriate support for pupils learning English as an additional language whenever necessary and pupils are encouraged to use their home and community languages to enhance their learning

BEHAVIOUR AND ATTENDANCE

The school expect high standards of behaviour from all pupils. We have procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour that are fair and applied equally to all. All staff are expected to operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline. It is recognised that background and disability may affect behaviour. Our schools take this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour (see Behaviour Management Policy). All forms of bullying and harassment, including racism and harassment related to disability, sexism and homophobia, are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently and are in line with relevant Norfolk LA policies. All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies. This school will take all reasonable steps to prevent the exclusion of a pupil for a reason related to any disability they may have. Pupils, staff and parents are aware of policies and procedures for dealing with

any unacceptable language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PUPILS, PARENTS/CARERS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Information and meetings for parents/carers are made accessible for all. Progress reports to parents/carers are clearly written and free from jargon to encourage parents to participate in their child's education. Parents/carers with a disability or with learning or language difficulties, will be able to access school's information. Parents are fully involved in the school-based response for their child with special educational needs. Informal events are designed to include the whole community and at times may target minority or marginalised groups.

ADMISSIONS

The Norfolk Admission requirements are followed to ensure the school's admission process is fair and equitable to all pupils, including short-stay Traveller and refugee pupils and those with English as an additional language. This school will not discriminate against a disabled pupil in the arrangements it makes for determining admission. Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in admissions forms.

LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

We recognise and celebrate the linguistic diversity in British society and look for opportunities to enrich the curricular experience of all our pupils by:

- ❖ Highlighting how English has borrowed from other languages
- ❖ Raising awareness of the similarities and differences between English and other languages.
- ❖ Reflecting the multilingual nature of our wider society in our resources and displays.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT - EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equitable and in line with statutory duties and Norfolk County Council guidelines. Equality and diversity issues are reflected in our school's employment practices. Everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. All staff, governors and visitors will be advised of and must support the ethos of the school, promoting equality and challenging bias and stereotyping wherever they observe it.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone who works at Astley Primary School has a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion and avoiding unfair discrimination.

Our governors are responsible for:

- Making sure the school complies with all current equality legislation
- Making sure this policy and its procedures are followed.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents know about it.
- Making sure its procedures are followed.
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy, if necessary.
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.

All our staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with racist, sexist and homophobic incidents, and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping.

- Promoting equality and good community relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic circumstances.
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- Knowing and following our equality policy

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the schools lies with a named member of staff and a named governor. Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues.
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents).
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of vulnerable groups of pupils e.g. SEN pupils
- Monitoring exclusions.

MONITORING, REVIEWING AND ASSESSING IMPACT

This scheme is supported by the school's single equality scheme action plan which runs for 3 years but is reviewed by staff and governors annually to ensure that it is effective in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. It includes targets determined by the governing body for inclusion and equality in the school, along with actions identified in consultation with pupils, parents/carers and staff. It also ensures other school policies address equality issues. The Headteacher will report annually to the governing bodies in the Spring Term Headteacher's Report including information on school population, workforce recruitment, retention and progression, key initiatives, progress against targets and future plans.