

Rosemellin School

Annual Equality Objectives 2024 -25

Crofty Education Trust publishes an Equality Statement which explains how the Trust (and schools within it) comply with their equality duties to:

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

Rosemellin School has considered how well we currently achieve the aims of this duty with regard to the protected equality groups. Using information that we have gathered we have decided upon our equality objectives. Our plans to meet these objectives will be monitored annually.

In compiling equality information we have:

- Reviewed the school's data, policies and practice and identified any gaps.
- Examined how our school engages with the protected groups, identifying where practice can be improved.

The outcomes are published within this plan, which has been agreed by our Local Governance Committee (LGC). In line with legislative requirements we will review progress against our plan annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a four year cycle.

Issue identified	Objective	Action	Success criteria (timescale and measures)
Predominantly monocultural area of the country, geographically isolated.	Increase the range of resources that depict positive images of people with protected characteristics and non-gender stereotyped resources.	Curriculum leaders audit resources and identify gaps. Order appropriate resources. Use Lyfta where appropriate to support units of work.	Pupils can confidently talk about the term Protected characteristics (at an age appropriate level). Incidents of prejudiced based bullying are rare.
pils with SEND do not achieve in line with non-SEND peers.	Increase the number of SEND pupils achieving ARE.	Monitor individual attainment and progress – discuss next steps at pupil progress meetings. Ensure that there are consistently high expectations and that work is appropriately adapted.	There is a reduction in the gap of SEND and non-SEND attainment.
Boys attainment in writing is lower than girls.	Increase the attainment in boys writing.	Monitor individual attainment and progress – discuss next steps at pupil progress meetings. Review and revise the curriculum to grasp and retain pupils' interest.	There is no gap between girl's and boy's attainment. Attainment in National assessments is at least in line with National averages.

Appendix I

Guidance for schools when writing their objectives

1. Is there any evidence to suggest that pupils from one or more of the 'protected' groups have lower than average attainment at the end of key stages?
2. Is there any evidence that pupils from one or more of the 'protected' groups are making slower progress than they should? (NB for some groups, such as older English as an additional language (EAL) learners, very rapid progress should be possible as they build on existing learning acquired in their first language)
3. What factors may be contributing to any issues identified? Is there other relevant data or evidence, for example Gifted and Talented registers, attendance, behaviour, exclusions? Is there any possibility that the school can address issues?
4. Have we used the pupil census process to collect information about hidden disabilities?
5. Are there any classroom curriculum access issues? (For example linked to disability, English as an additional language)
6. What factors may be contributing to any issues identified? Is there any possibility that the school can address issues?
7. Is there any evidence of poorer participation of some groups in lunchtime, after school or other extra-curricular activities?
8. Is there any evidence of prejudice or of racial, homophobic, disability-related or sexist language or incidents taking place in school? (These might be cases of bullying, but might also just be uses of language not directed at a particular victim, or indications of prejudiced attitudes towards certain groups)
9. Are there any groups of pupils who tend to be isolated?
10. Do you have any relevant evidence from parents or carers or other sources about attitudes in school or the local community?
11. Are all protected groups represented on the pupil council?
12. Is lack of representation of some groups a concern? What factors may be contributing to any issues identified? Is there any possibility that the school can address issues?
13. Have there been any allegations of discrimination, harassment or victimisation? Are there any issues for the school arising from these?
14. Are there any staff training needs, in any section of the school's staff relating to equality or diversity?
15. What needs have been identified and how could they best be met?

Appendix II

Important Things to Consider when Planning Actions

From DfE [Equality Act Advice Final.pdf](#)

Positive Action provisions allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim.

Victimisation It is unlawful to victimise a child for anything done in relation to the Act by their parent or sibling.

Auxiliary aids The Act extends the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils.

Curriculum The content of the school curriculum has never been caught by discrimination law, and the Act states explicitly that it is excluded. However, the way in which a school provides education – the delivery of the curriculum – is explicitly included. Excluding the content of the curriculum ensures that schools are free to include a full range of issues, ideas and materials in their syllabus, and to expose pupils to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial, without fear of legal challenge based on a protected characteristic. But schools will need to ensure that the way in which issues are taught does not subject individual pupils to discrimination.

The following are examples of complaints against the content of the curriculum, and none of them would give rise to a valid complaint under the Act.

- A boy complains that it is sex discrimination for him to be required to do a module on feminist thought.
- A girl complains that putting *The Taming of the Shrew* on the syllabus is discriminatory; or a Jewish pupil objects to having to study *The Merchant of Venice*.
- A fundamentalist Christian objects to the teaching of evolution in science lessons unbalanced by the teaching of “intelligent design”.
- A school does a project to mark Gay Pride Week. A heterosexual pupil claims that he finds this embarrassing and that it discriminates against him on grounds of his sexual orientation; a Christian or a Muslim pupil objects to it on religious grounds.

However, valid complaints that the curriculum is being delivered in a discriminatory way might well arise in situations such as the following:

- A teacher uses the fact that ‘*The Taming of the Shrew*’ is a set book to make derogatory generalisations about the inferiority of women, in a way which makes the girls in the class feel belittled. Or, in teaching ‘*The Merchant of Venice*’, he encourages the class to laugh at a Jewish pupil.
- In class discussions, black pupils are never called on and the teacher makes it clear that she is not interested in their views.
- Girls are not allowed to do design technology or boys are discouraged from doing food technology. This is not intrinsic to the curriculum itself but to the way in which education is made available to pupils.

Acts of worship There is a general exception, which applies to all schools, to the religion or belief provisions which allows all schools to have acts of worship or other forms of collective religious observance. This means the daily act of collective worship, which for maintained schools is mandatory and should be of a broadly Christian nature, is not covered by the religion or belief provisions. The exception means that schools will not be acting unlawfully if they do not provide an equivalent act of worship for other faiths.

Schools are also free to celebrate religious festivals and could not be claimed to be discriminating against children of other faiths if, for example, they put on a nativity play at Christmas or hold a celebration to mark other religious festivals such as Diwali or Eid.

Uniforms The Equality Act does not deal specifically with school uniform or other aspects of appearance such as hair colour and style, and the wearing of jewellery and make-up, but the general requirement not to discriminate in the treatment of pupils applies here as in relation to other aspects of school policy. It is for the governing body of a school to decide whether there should be a school uniform and other rules relating to appearance, and if so what they should be.

Long-standing guidance makes it clear that schools must have regard to their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 (it is here rather than in relation to equality law that most case law has been determined to date) as well as under equality law, and that they need to be careful that blanket uniform policies do not discriminate because of race, religion or belief, gender, disability, gender reassignment or sexual orientation. Consequently it will be up to the individual school to consider the implications their uniform requirements have on their pupils.

For example, differences in dress requirements for girls and boys are standard, and where they don't have significantly more detrimental effects on one sex or the other they are unlikely to be regarded as discriminatory. But it might be unlawful if, for example, the uniform was considerably more expensive for girls than for boys. Schools need also to consider whether flexibility is needed in relation to uniform to meet the needs of a pupil who is undergoing gender reassignment. It may also be discrimination because of disability if, for example, a child who has a skin condition which means they cannot wear nylon is not allowed to wear cotton trousers as part of the uniform. Schools should be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising important school policies, such as school safety or discipline. It is well established that it would be race discrimination to refuse to let a Sikh child wear a turban because of a school policy requiring that caps be worn, but legal judgments have not supported the absolute right of people of faith to wear garments or jewellery to indicate that faith.

Bullying The issue of bullying motivated by prejudice is a particularly sensitive issue. Although the relationship between one pupil and another is not within the scope of the Act, schools need to ensure that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying are taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.