



Ashwell School

Equality Information 2014/15

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which applies to all public bodies, including schools. The act defines eight different 'protected characteristics' which the PSED extends to, of which four are relevant to primary schools. These are:

1. Race
2. Disability
3. Sex
4. Religion or belief

Schools are required to:-

- Eliminate discrimination
- 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.

In order to show the community how the school is promoting equality, we are also required to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with the PSED at least annually
- Publish equality objectives every four years.

How Ashwell School Complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty

1. Race

In 2013-14 7.4% of Ashwell School pupils were from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Eliminating discrimination

Discrimination against children because of their ethnic background is considered completely unacceptable. There is no discrimination in admission to the school or in access to all aspects of educational provision, either in the classroom or in extra-curricular activities.

Equality of opportunity

Attainment data from across the school shows that Ashwell School pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well or better than the majority of pupils, who are from a white British background, and make as good progress in their learning as the majority. All pupils are encouraged to participate fully in school activities, including extra-curricular clubs and trips out of school.

Any racist bullying or unkind behaviour such as name calling is dealt with immediately and very firmly. Children and staff throughout the school are expected and encouraged to report any such behaviour to an adult and a record is kept of any incidents. [Link to guidelines on behaviour.](#)

Fostering good relations

Developing children's understanding of a people from a range of ethnic backgrounds and promoting tolerance and friendship are vital aspects of the school curriculum.

- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons often focus on these aspects, for example exploring the idea that 'Everyone is different but everyone is equal'.
- Assemblies are used to promote tolerance, for example during the 2014 World Cup we focussed on the ethnic diversity of the English football team to discuss the idea of racism, using materials from the 'Kick racism out of football' campaign. Other assemblies focus on stories from a range of cultural traditions.
- Ashwell School is twinned with Millfield School in Hackney, which has a more ethnically diverse school roll. Each year, children from Millfield School visit Ashwell School and spend time with our children, and most years, children from Ashwell School visit Millfield School and Hackney Museum where they can learn about the history of immigration.
- Virtually all our Year 5 and 6 pupils take part in two five day residential school journeys during their time at Ashwell School. We generally visit a city on alternate years, such as Bristol in 2013 and 2015, where children have the opportunity to experience a more diverse population than in their home villages.
- We have a longstanding friendship with Lelongwe School in Malawi, and periodically exchange news and children's work.
- In planning the curriculum, teachers make sure that they include multi-cultural aspects, for example studying Mary Seacole as well as Florence Nightingale; whole school cross curricular work about other countries such as India, Malawi or China; learning about other countries in connection with sporting events such as the Olympics and the World Cup.
- We make sure that the book stocks in both the school library and classrooms reflect a range of cultures and ethnicities.
- Currently one of our parents is running a lunchtime Mandarin club for Year 2 children.

2. Disability

Currently there are 7 pupils at Ashwell School (2.6% of the school roll) who have a disability.

Eliminating discrimination

The admissions policy of the school does not discriminate in terms of disability. If a disabled child is admitted to the school, we make every reasonable adjustment we can to make sure that s/he has full access to the school curriculum and all activities.

Equality of opportunity

- Children with disabilities often receive support from specialist services provided by Hertfordshire County Council to remove or reduce barriers to learning and participation as much as possible. Examples of this provision currently in place in the school include radio microphones for teachers to wear, specialist speech therapy, specialist computer equipment to help manage visually impairment, adapted furniture, and visits by occupational therapists, physiotherapists, educational psychologists, speech therapists and other specialists to give advice to staff and parents.
- Disabled pupils often need extra support from adults, which is sometimes provided by a learning support assistant working one to one for several hours a week, depending on the severity of the disability.
- Staff receive the necessary training to enable them to support disabled pupils, such as training in supporting children with hearing or visual impairment, in using Makaton sign language and in managing medical conditions.

- The school has been adapted over time to make it more accessible to people with disabilities, despite the large number of flights of steps in the building. All rooms in the school are accessible by wheelchair users, though for some rooms access is from outside via a pathway without steps which runs round the school; the new block has a disability lift. [Link to the accessibility plan.](#)
- Children with disabilities are included in all school activities such as physical education (PE) lessons, clubs, out of school trips and residential school journeys
- Any bullying or unkind behaviour towards disabled pupils such as name calling is dealt with promptly and very firmly.

Fostering good relations

The school promotes a positive attitude to people with disabilities, for example

- Children are taught Paralympic sports such as bocca as part of their PE curriculum and some year groups have the opportunity to play these sports with other schools at the annual North Herts School Sports Partnership Olympic legacy event.
- As part of whole school cross curricular work connected to 2012 Olympics, we invited a disabled athlete to visit the school with his racing wheelchair.
- Developing an understanding of disability is part of the PHSE curriculum and the library contains a range of books that teachers and parents can use to help children in this respect.

3. Sex

Ashwell School is a mixed school and has roughly equal numbers of boys and girls.

Eliminating discrimination

All activities and opportunities at school are open to both girls and boys.

Equality of opportunity

- We closely monitor the attainment and progress rates of pupils and as part of this we compare the attainment of boys and girls, looking for any trends. In 2012 we identified that boys' attainment was generally lower than girls at the end of Key Stage One (Year 2); as a result we took various measures to improve boys' attainment, including choosing more 'boy-friendly' topics to learn and write about, and buying more 'boy-friendly' books. Over the last two years the attainment gap between boys and girls at the end of Key Stage One has narrowed significantly. The relative attainment of boys and girls at the end of Key Stage Two (Year 6) varies from year to year with no discernible pattern and the same is true of relative progress rates of boys and girls from different year groups across the school.
- All school activities including PE lessons and extra-curricular clubs and teams are open to both girls and boys: we sometimes have boys in our netball team and girls in our football team. The exception to this was a football club we ran last year specifically for girls to develop their confidence and skills, as well as the normal football club open to both sexes. We encourage boys and girls to take part in activities which may not fit with gender stereotypes, for example all boys, as well as girls, learn to play the violin and recorder as part of their music lessons.
- In planning our teaching, we make sure that the children learn about the achievements of both men and women, and we choose books with both male and female lead characters.
- Any sexist language is challenged and sexist stereotypes are discussed as part of PSHE lessons.

Fostering good relations

We try to minimise the gender divide that some primary children feel by encouraging boys and girls to work and play together. We very rarely group children by gender in the classroom, and mix boys and girls up in classroom seating, lining up, teaching groups, taking the register and PE activities.

4. Religion and belief

The majority of children at Ashwell School come from homes which are either Christian or not religious. We currently have a small number of pupils from other faith backgrounds, including Judaism and Hinduism.

Eliminating discrimination

Discrimination against children because of their religious background is considered completely unacceptable. There is no discrimination in admissions, and all activities and experiences in school are open to children of all faiths or none.

Equality of opportunity

- Any unkind behaviour or bullying related to religion would be very firmly dealt with.
- Any dietary needs related to religion are accommodated, and as we have no uniform, there are no problems relating to clothing.

Fostering good relations

- We follow the Hertfordshire Approved Syllabus for Religious Education (RE). During their years at primary school, children learn about all the major world faiths and are taught to respect other people's beliefs and traditions. As part of their RE studies, children normally visit a number of different places of worship, including for example Christian churches, a mosque, a Sikh gurdwara and a synagogue.
- Our school library includes books about a range of different religions.
- Ashwell School is not a church school and assemblies are non-denominational. Children are not expected to pray or sing Christian hymns unless they choose to.
- Significant festivals from a number of different faiths are marked, either in assemblies or lessons, and representatives of different faiths occasionally visit the school.

If you have any concerns or questions relating to equality issues, please come and discuss them with the headteacher.