

# Cherry Tree Academy

## Equality & Diversity Statement

### Including Racial and Disability Equality Duties

December 2021

This statement demonstrates our commitment to fair and equal treatment of all pupils, staff, visitors, prospective employees and any others member of our school community in relation to gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, aptitude, religion or belief. It also outlines the strategies and procedures in place to ensure that equality is effectively practiced in our school, incorporating all our statutory duties within Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000), Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and Equalities Act 2006 – both as amended.

NB: Equality is not about treating everyone the same - it is about making changes so everyone has the same opportunities; diversity is about valuing all sorts of differences.

Any specific definitions we work with are included later in this policy.

Cherry Tree Academy is a fully inclusive environment committed to ensuring all members of our school family are: Safe, Healthy, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution to Society and their Economic Wellbeing.

At Cherry Tee Academy we always try to listen to all members of our community and for ongoing consultation to be part of everything we do - this is a very important part of who we are and the systems we will put in place to ensure this happens are outlined later on in this statement.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Cherry Tree academy is fully committed to ensuring everyone is treated fairly and with respect. We are fully committed that all our children, staff and volunteers are given every opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Pupils will have equal access to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum.

We believe that everyone has the right to work and learn in a safe and supportive environment.

We are developing a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of all pupils is monitored and we use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.

We make reasonable adjustments to make sure that the school environment is as accessible as possible to everyone.

We believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

We also have regard for our statutory duties as outlined in the following Acts of Parliament:

- The Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000) imposes a general duty for schools to:
  1. Promote equality of opportunity
  2. Promote good race relations
  3. Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
  
- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 imposes the general duty to:
  1. Promote equality of opportunity
  2. Eliminate unlawful discrimination
  3. Eliminate disability and related harassment
  4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
  5. Encourage disabled people's participation in public life
  6. Take steps to take into account people's disabilities, even where that involves more favourable treatment
  
- The Equalities Act 2006 imposes the general duty to develop a society in which:
  1. People's ability to achieve their potential is not limited by prejudice or discrimination
  2. There is respect for and protection of each individual's human rights
  3. There is respect for the dignity and worth of each individual
  4. Each individual has an equal opportunity to participate in society
  5. There is mutual respect between groups based on understanding, valuing diversity and on shared respect for equality and human rights

## **EXPLANATIONS OF ORGANISATION**

This statement refers throughout to the right of all individuals to be treated fairly and equally. This is relevant to all members of our school community including pupils, parents, staff, governors, visitors and prospective employees. It deals with generic issues relevant to all areas of equality. Many of the statutory duties outlined above actually overlap. Where there are specific issues or procedures within a statutory document these will be highlighted or referred to within the appendices.

This statement covers all aspects of school life, including all extended services activities, school visits, residential visits and any transportation. It covers the recruitment of prospective staff and governors. It covers access to all parts of school and the curriculum. It covers all parts of the school day including child care provision, teaching and lunchtime.

## **DEFINITIONS**

The definition of equality we understand is:

*Equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given fair chances. Equality is not about treating everyone in the same way, but it recognises that their needs are met in different ways.*

So, what is diversity?

*Diversity is about valuing individual difference. It is about recognising, valuing and managing differences to enable all to contribute and realise their full potential. Diversity challenges us to recognise and value all sorts of differences.*

The definition of disability we understand is:

*A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The definitions of racial discrimination we understand are:

*Racism is treating someone differently or unfair simply because they belong to a different race or culture.*

People can also experience prejudice because of their religion or nationality.

According to UN International Conventions, *“the term “racial discrimination shall mean and distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life”*

The definitions of religion and belief we understand are:

*Although religion or belief is not specifically defined, Employment Equality Legislation 2003 states that religion or belief is ‘any religious belief or similar philosophical belief. There’s no specific list, but it includes all major religions, and less widely practiced ones. If it is uncertain what counts as a religion or belief under law, a tribunal will decide taking into consideration things such as acts of collective worship, a clear belief system, a profound belief affecting the way of life or view of the world.*

### **INVOLVEMENT OF OTHERS**

In order for this statement to be implemented effectively, a wide range of people need to be involved: Pupils, staff, parents, governors and service users.

### **PROMOTING EQUALITY AT CHERRY TREE ACADEMY**

Opportunities will be actively sought to promote positive images of all groups in society through the curriculum and to explore why some groups are treated differently and how we can respond to this - this will be done firmly but sensitively.

If a situation arises where any one person is potentially at risk of not being treated the same as others or not able to access the same opportunities to address this. (this includes physical access to buildings, visits and residential)

If a number of incidents have been prevalent within a particular year group, we will use circle time, story time or assembly to investigate and address the issue with all pupils.

Pupil tracking data will be used to monitor the progress of all children and any inequalities will be investigated and addressed through targeted intervention, so all children are able to achieve their potential.

All staff will be made aware of the correct procedures for identifying, recording and reporting any action they consider to be discriminatory - staff will always inform a member of the leadership team.

If, through an investigation, any members of staff were identified as acting in a discriminatory way, then appropriate action would be taken - including disciplinary action if necessary.

All incidents of harassment or bullying will be thoroughly investigated, recorded and dealt with according to the behaviour policy - if there are any concerns regarding disability, racism or inequality these will be reported to the appropriate body within the LA using the appropriate forms and following agreed WMDC procedures.

Parents of any pupils involved in any of the incidents outlined above - perpetrator or victim - will be informed and, if relevant, kept up to date about the subsequent investigations.

We will monitor any incidents of harassment and bullying of disabled persons and they will be encouraged to report and take action against offenders.

We will monitor and record any incidents of racial harassment or bullying because of race, religion or belief against any members of the school community and these will be reported to the GB, LA and MAT.

Parental concerns relating to religion and culture will be considered carefully and with sensitivity - parental wishes for a pupil to be withdrawn from religious celebration will always be respected.

All permanent posts in school will be advertised and open to the widest pool of applicants - the best person for the post will be appointed according to the essential and desirable criteria agreed prior to the advert being placed.

All staff will have access to continuous professional development and be supported to develop and achieve their full potential within their chosen career path.