



Brookside Primary School **Equality Policy and Plan**

Date updated – March 2021

Review Date – March 2022

Introduction

This policy forms a single equality policy. It details Brookside School's policy on our day-to-day practices and interactions with the whole school community. It reflects the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that schools must adopt a proactive approach to equality. In practice, this requires our school to:

- Take positive and proactive steps to identify areas of potential inequality before they have the chance to make an impact
- Make changes to ensure that any areas of potential inequality are eliminated.

This policy should be read in conjunction with 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools – Department advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities' Published May 2014.

This policy is largely based on the Oxfordshire County Council Model Policy for Equality – downloaded from the OCC Intranet May 2020.

Aims

Equality at Brookside Primary School is about providing equality and excellence for all to secure the highest possible standards of attainment. Equality applies to all members of the school community: pupils, parents, community, staff and governors.

The primary aim of Brookside School is to enable all pupils to take part as fully as possible in every part of school life by developing each child's self-confidence, recognising their strengths and encouraging them to achieve their full potential.

This means:

- We will take reasonable and necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, to enable our pupils to fully participate in school life
- We are committed to ensuring staff with a disability have equality of opportunity
- We will expect positive attitudes towards pupils and staff and everyone to treat others with dignity and respect
- We will regularly consider the ways in which our teaching and the curriculum provision will support high standards of attainment, promote common values, and help students understand and value the diversity that surrounds them, and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- We will monitor the progress and achievement of pupils by the relevant and appropriate protected characteristics. This information will help the school to ensure that individual pupils are achieving their potential, the school is being inclusive in practice, and trends are identified.
- We will collect and analyse information about protected characteristics in relation to staff recruitment, retention, training opportunities and promotions to ensure all staff have equality of opportunity in extra-curricular activities and residential visits,





and the school will monitor the uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

- We expect that all staff will be role-models for equal opportunities, deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents and be able to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- It is important that in this school we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a diverse society.
- Acknowledging and addressing prejudice and prejudice based incidents and taking positive action to eliminate this
- Making the school a place where everyone feels welcomed and valued
- Increasing participation and fostering good relations between different groups within the school and within the wider community
- Ensuring that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained

At Brookside Primary School we believe in providing an education which allows children to be ready, respectful and safe in the world they are growing up in. Children will develop the skills of cooperation, concentration, resilience, curiosity, imagination and reflection to enable them to be responsible citizens of the United Kingdom and the world.

Everyone is expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same. At Brookside we are committed to creating an environment where exemplary behaviour is at the heart of productive learning and is the expected behaviour of all.

School Vision

At Brookside Primary School we believe in providing a safe, welcoming, happy and well ordered school environment in which children can learn effectively and reach the highest standards of which they are capable;

We encourage all our children to show these learning powers which form our values and are considered skills for life by the whole school community;

- **Concentration**
- **Resilience**
- **Cooperation**
- **Curiosity**
- **Imagination**
- **Reflection**

We believe that the partnership between home and school plays a vital role in ensuring that we provide the very best education, environment and example for our children. Partnership with families underpins all that we do. We realise that we have the privilege to work with young people from Bicester on their journey of *Learning for Life*.

We believe all members of the school community should be equally valued and at the same time we have equal responsibility and part to play in helping our children to develop into independent, responsible and caring individuals.

Brookside School's aims are designed to ensure that the school provides equality of education and opportunity for all. The school considers the needs of all, taking account of





learning ability, disability, ethnicity, culture, gender, language, race, faith or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic factors.

As a School we aim to;

- Ensure that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their full potential
- Make reasonable adjustments for disability
- Respect, value and celebrate differences between people
- Prepare pupils for life in a diverse society

Leadership and Management

All the school policies reflect a commitment to inclusion and equalities. A clear ethos is also set by the governing body and the school management, which reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community. The school advances equalities of opportunity through positive and proactive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.

The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.

The school management works in partnership with others to eliminate all forms of oppressive behaviour; prejudice related incidents and discrimination.

All members of the school community, including pupils, parents, community and staff are consulted and contribute to the development and review of policy documents. The school ensures the involvement of governors and takes positive action to enable consultations and contribution of all.

The evaluations of plans and policies are used to set equality objectives and address equality issues. The development of teaching and the curriculum are monitored to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school, local, UK and global community.

The school recognises it has to make special efforts to ensure that all groups prosper including:

- Boys and girls, men and women or people who identify as other sexes
- All minority ethnic groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers
- Pupils or families with different religions or beliefs
- Pupils and others with special educational needs
- Pupils and others with a range of disabilities
- Children looked after and their carers
- Children or staff who are gay or lesbian
- Pupils or staff who are pregnant or have just given birth
- Pupils or staff undergoing gender reassignment

Brookside School recognises that a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 covers the following groups:

- Age (for employees)
- Disability
- Race
- Sex (including transgender)
- Gender reassignment





- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

The school uses the data management systems available to it to identify vulnerable groups or individuals and is able to analyse this data to monitor trends linked to these groups or individuals.

Brookside School is located in the town of Bicester in Oxfordshire.

In March 2021 the following information represented the school pupil population.

- 51% of the pupils are male
- 17% of the pupils are eligible for free school meals (FSM)
- 18% of pupils are eligible for the Pupil Premium grant (PP)
- 14% of pupils have English as an additional language (EAL)
- 14% of pupils have Special Educational Needs or a disability (SEND)
 - 24% of pupils who have SEND are also entitled to FSM
 - 29% of pupils who have SEND are also entitled to PP
 - 14% of pupils who have SEND are also EAL
 - 75% of pupils who have SEND are male
- 73% of pupils are White British or any other white background
- 19 other languages are spoken by pupils at home in addition to English
- 36% of the pupils are Christian, 39% have no religion. Other world religions represented by 10% of the pupils include Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Roman Catholic. 14% of children have no data recorded for religion.
- 1% of pupils have parents who are in the armed forces.

Brookside School is in the Cherwell Ward of Bicester West

- 12% of children are living in poverty – compared with 10% across Cherwell
- The overall crime rate is higher than the average across Cherwell
- 23% of people have no qualifications – compared with 10% across Cherwell
- 17% have no car – compared with 16% across Cherwell
- 10.2% of children live in 'out of work' households – compared with 7.6% across Cherwell
- 21.8% of children live in lone parent households – compared with 19.6% across Cherwell
- 12.4% of children live in poverty – compared to 10.1% across Cherwell
- A larger number of houses are rented from a housing association or the Local Authority than the national average
- Depression and obesity are the two most prevalent diseases in the population of adults and children – higher than the Cherwell average
- Bicester West has a IMD score of 4, demonstrating that its population is among the most deprived 40% in the nation.
- Bicester West has an income deprivation affecting children score of 1. This demonstrates that they are in the most deprived 10% in the country.

The school has identified the following issues that may be barriers to effective learning and successful working at the school:





- Low income leading to difficulty in participating in some aspects of school life and no adequate home study space
- Low parental support or different parental expectations
- Lack of help with emotional, mental & physical well-being and poor behaviour including exclusions
- Language difficulties
- Special Educational Needs
- Recruitment, management and development of staff and governors

School's Commitment to Equalities

As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

- eliminate discrimination,
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

We understand the principal of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

In order to meet our general duties, listed above, the law requires us to fulfil specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties. These are to:

- publish equality information – to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions. We will not publish any information that can specifically identify any child, parent, staff member or governor
- Prepare and publish equality objectives

Our objectives will detail how we will ensure equality if applied to the services listed above. However where we find evidence that other functions have a significant impact on any particular group we will include work in this area.

We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The school recognises that new Positive Action provisions in the Equalities Act 2010 allow us to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. If we decide to use these we will ensure that it is a proportionate response to achieve the relevant aim.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the School complies with all relevant equalities legislation and ensures that the policy; related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Headteacher will also ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

A named member of staff will be responsible for leading on equalities.





Equality Policy

The School has identified the following strategies that are specifically designed to address those issues.

Establishing, maintaining and developing a school culture and ethos

The School opposes all forms of harassment, prejudice related incidents and discrimination and publicly celebrates diversity. The School also actively promotes good personal and community relations.

As a school we celebrate the diversity of the wider community of Bicester, Oxfordshire and the United Kingdom and are committed to the principles of inclusion and equality of opportunity. Diversity is respected and inclusion is a strength of the school.

Specifically Brookside school;

- Is committed to celebrating diversity and equality in many ways, in particular by recognising the uniqueness of every individual
- Has good personal and community relations which are actively promoted by fostering a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all members of our community
- Recognises diversity as having a positive role to play within the School
- Collects information on ethnicity, gender and disability during the admissions process and this is updated with parents annually
- Uses whole school systems to emphasise praise, recognition and reward exist which promote and celebrate positive behaviour, sustained effort and hard work, contributions to the school community and also achievements outside school. A weekly Celebration Assembly is held each week for pupils in Y1-Y6. Pupils in EYFS celebrate their achievements weekly during show and tell and parents contribute share achievements which have taken place at home
- Promotes positive attitudes towards people of different ethnic groups and religions for example through visitors to school and to places of worship
- Involves pupils, parents and staff in the life and work of the school for example through involvement in community events and through FOBS
- Promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people by having an open admissions policy and including all children in all activities
- Promotes high expectation through celebrating achievement
- Communicates behaviour expectations through modelling good behaviour, and having a clear and explicit Positive Relationship (Behaviour) Policy which is shared with pupils, staff and parents
- Ensures that we welcome applications for school places and for jobs from all sections by having a comprehensive, non-selective intake. The school uses the Oxfordshire County Council Admissions Policy and the Local Authority manages admissions to the school. Advertisements for jobs state that there are no barriers to job applications as we adhere to the Oxfordshire County Council Equal Opportunity Policies
- Has a SENDCo who meets with all pupils who may need additional support to access the school, the school day, educational visits and the wider curriculum

Preventing and dealing effectively with bullying and harassment

Recognising that the groups covered in this policy are more vulnerable to bullying and harassment, the school:

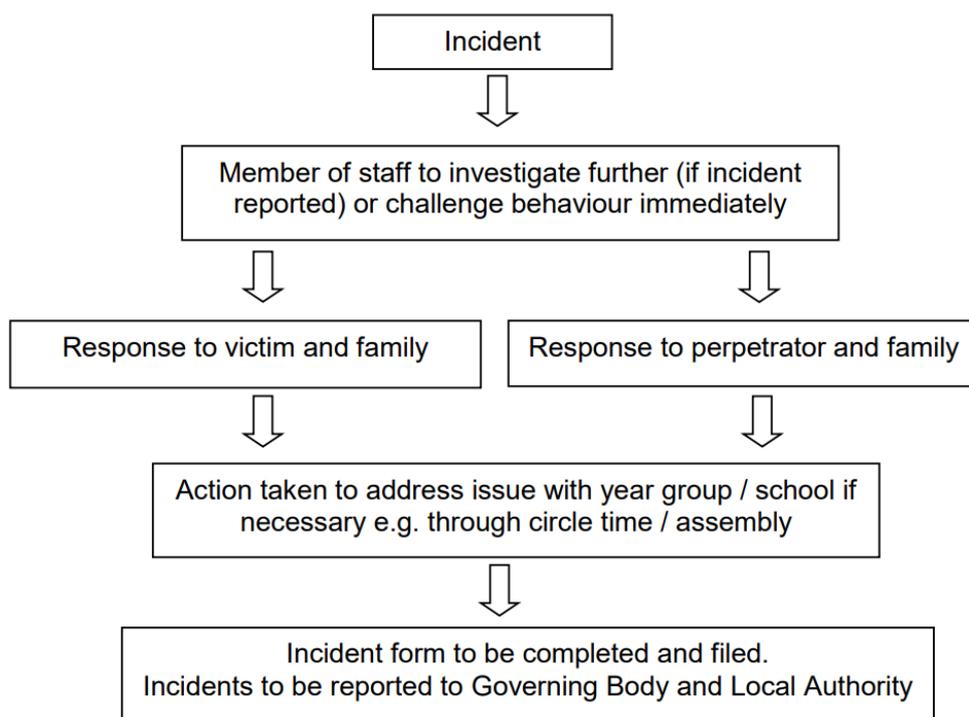




- Communicates to pupils, parents and staff that bullying and harassment is not acceptable through the Positive Relationship (Behaviour) Policy and Anti Bullying Policy
- Ensures that incidents of bullying and harassment are reported and addressed swiftly and effectively, and that a member of the Leadership Team is informed
- Records, analyses and reports bullying and harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation and other protected characteristics.

All staff are aware of how they report incidents which they consider to be bullying, discrimination or harassment. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school, to ensure that incidents are reported and addressed swiftly and effectively

The agreed procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:



Listening to pupils, staff, parents and others

To ensure that the views of all stakeholders are considered:

- Children are encouraged to express their views during PSHCE lessons and through regular conversations with staff.
- The school hears the 'pupil voice' through the Children's council – known as KOBS (Kids of Brookside School)
- The school actively seeks staff views and listens to staff concerns, for example through Team and Staff Meetings. The leadership team have an 'open door' policy where staff can raise concerns with any member of the leadership team. The headteacher holds Professional Meetings with each member of staff in July each year to reflect upon the school year
- The school seeks the views of parents through parent/teacher consultations, weekly newsletters and surveys
- The school encourages, enables and hears the full range of views including those with disabilities by taking the advice of the Local Authority.





Equalising opportunities

Recognising that some groups covered by this policy are likely to be economically disadvantaged, the school:

- Ensures that school uniform is affordable by avoiding expensive clothing. Items of clothing are sold online to ensure that it is accessible to all parents. The Friends of Brookside School sell good quality second-hand uniform at various points during the year
- Avoids putting parents under unnecessary financial pressure by offering subsidies for certain activities, for example the cost of school trips and visits
- Promotes the take up of extra-curricular opportunities by making no charge for clubs run by the school. Attendance of clubs is monitored on Integris to ensure equality of opportunity. The Schools After School Club and Breakfast Club are priced very competitively compared to those offered by other schools in Bicester and therefore represent a cost effective method of child care for all parents

Informing and involving parents and carers

Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to find school intimidating, strange or inaccessible, the school:

- Explains how it operated through its fortnightly newsletter, its website, information sessions for parents and through curriculum newsletters each term
- Offers a range of ways of communicating between school and parents that meet parents' circumstances and needs through telephone contact or email, the HSLW and parents' evenings
- Actively encourages parents to attend consultation evenings by teachers or the school office telephoning non-attenders or making alternative arrangements. This is particularly important for pupils with SEND or who are vulnerable
- Has a designated parking space for disabled drivers in the school car park
- Ensures that parents understand how well their child is progressing through regular progress checks and the annual end of year report
- Explains to parents how they can help their child at home for example through class-based parent workshops, information evenings and information letters
- Explains how parents and others can help in school, for example by helping in classrooms, on school visits, hearing children read or by joining FOBS.
- Encourages parents to join the PTA and the Governing Body by regular announcements on Twitter and the school newsletter and through the use of information boards around school.

Welcoming new pupils and helping them to settle in effectively

Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to find school intimidating, strange or inaccessible, and to move mid-year, the school:

- Fosters a happy start through induction sessions for Nursery and Reception pupils at the start of the new academic year
- Ensures that through a staggered start for pupils in Nursery and Reception they have a positive start to the school year
- Challenges any inappropriate behaviour or attitudes
- Briefs all staff to monitor vulnerable pupils and to communicate any concerns to class teachers
- Ensures effective school transfer and induction mid-year by the use of visits, buddies and sensitive communication between home and school





- Invites pupils, and their parents, who join the school mid-year to visit the school and discuss the needs of their pupil
- Ensures that extra help is given to children who find a change in school challenging, for example through use of the Learning Mentor
- Ensures that extra help is given to vulnerable pupils on transition to secondary school through the use of additional visits, particularly to The Bicester School
- Ensures that the SENDCo and/or class teacher speaks to the receiving school about an specific needs of pupils who are transferring to their school
- Ensures well-planned school adjustments are made to cater for a child with disabilities including the availability of additional classroom support
- Ensures that pupils with disabilities join the school when provision is in place to support all of their needs, with support from the School Health Nurse and the Occupational Therapist team.
- Liaises with support services/schools of transfer in advance to inform any ongoing necessary modifications or alterations to provision.

Addressing the full range of learning needs

Brookside School recognises that some of the groups covered by this policy are more likely to under achieve and therefore we aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to success, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement.

To do this, we:

- Use contextual data to improve ways in which we track pupil progress and identify under-performance, and provide support to individuals and groups or pupils
- Monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping
- Provide opportunities or pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures, for example every two years all pupils in KS2 learn about and take part in a Passover afternoon
- Seek to involve parents in supporting their child's education
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes and the impact on learning
- Ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the needs and interests of all pupils
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils
- Ensure that the school's Marking Policy promotes learning for all
- Promote and maintain high levels of attendance, for example through termly monitoring of data, recognising and awarding high attendance

Supporting learners with particular needs

Recognising that some groups covered in this policy are more likely to have particular needs, the school:

- Will provide distance learning for any child out of school for health reasons, with support from the Hospital School
- Will prepare Electronic Personal Education Plans to focus on learning priorities for any child in care, with support from the Virtual School
- Provide in-class Teacher/TA support and intervention groups for all children identified as needing additional support
- Arrange language support as required





- Support vulnerable pupils and parents through the use of the Safeguarding team – namely the Learning Mentors and HSLW
- Provide a resourced room for quiet reflection or prayer if requested by parents or pupils
- Provide appropriate training to enable staff to meet particular needs, such as training from the School Nurse Service, Young Carers, Behaviour Support Services or the Educational Psychologist
- Will draw on the expertise of outside professional services to meet the individual needs of pupils. Brookside School works with the following outside agencies
 - Children's Social Care
 - Family Solutions Service
 - LCSS
 - Connections
 - Educational Psychologist
 - Speech and Language Therapists
 - SEN Support Service Teachers for Communication and Interaction
 - School Health Service
 - Young Carers
 - CAMHS/Horizon
 - Aquarius
- Will liaise with the receiving school when pupils transition to ensure a smooth transition for pupils with addition needs.

Making the school accessible to all

The school:

- Meets the needs of pupils, staff and others with physical or sensory disabilities by providing designated toilets and adaptations made to the school buildings as appropriate
- Ensures that curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities are available or pupils with disabilities by accessing access issues and putting risk assessments in place
- Provides additional support for pupils who require a higher level of supervision at break, whilst eating, whilst toileting and on visits out of school
- Identifies further development by assessing the needs of pupils and seeking support from outside agencies to identify how the school can be developed further
- The school has ramped access throughout EYFS and KS2. The KS1 building would require ramps at the emergency exits to make it fully accessible for wheelchair users. There is a lift for use by those who require it in the two story building and a disabled refuge is present at the top of the stairs to ensure safe evacuation. There is an accessible toilet in all areas of the school.

Ensuring fair and equal treatment for pupils

Recognising that the school needs to ensure that its policies and practice does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against the pupils, the school:

- Will ensure a fair admissions procedure for pupils in Nursery
- Use the OCC Admissions Policy for pupils in YR – Y6
- Will accommodate the needs of different cultures, races and religions where reasonably possible (in relation to wearing of uniform for example)
- Monitors the use of sanctions to ensure that staff impose these fairly across all pupils which is clearly outlined in the Positive Relationship (Behaviour) Policy
- Will ensure where relevant that teaching or the expression of religious belief about same sex relationships is conveyed responsibly and sensitively





Ensuring fair and equal treatment for staff and others

Recognising that the school needs to ensure that its policies and practice does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against adults as well as pupils in the school and that positive role models and a wider perspective will strengthen the school, we will:

- Demonstrate our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing, recruitment and employment practices
- Ensure that all staff appointments are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Public Sector Equality Duty (149, 1-9)

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and activity promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith of religion and considered with appointing staff and re-evaluating staff structures to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Brookside School, as part of Oxfordshire County Council (the Local Authority) has due regard to the need to –

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff
- Promoting dignity at work through adopting the OCC Dignity at Work Policy
- Leadership team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all

Encourage participation of under-represented groups

Recognising that the school has an opportunity to model empowerment of all groups including disabled, ethnic, religious and socially & economically disadvantaged groups, the school will:

- Recruit governors representative of the pupil population and community
- Encourage the widest participation in PTA (FOBS) activities by running events that appeal to a cross section of the school community
- Support individuals and community groups to express their case on matters affecting themselves and their community through newsletters, invitations to speak during assemblies, through distribution of information leaflets as agreed by the headteacher.

Monitoring and Evaluating the policy

Recognising that the strength of this policy depends upon ensuring that everyone is actively implementing it and that gaps and the need for further development will arise from effective evaluation, the school will:

- Ensure that all staff and governors receive appropriate training on equality





- Consult with pupils, parents and staff on how the policy is working and how it could be improved
- Monitors and reviews practice annually
- Report to governors
- Report to parents and pupils when appropriate

