

Blaydon West Primary School

November 2024- 2028

Equality Policy

Why we have developed this Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for Blaydon West Primary School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including Equal opportunities, Racial Equality, Disability Equality and Gender Equality. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, governors, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our policies and practices have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we listen to and involve pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

In our school we have a predominantly white, Christian population. November 2024 - Approximately 70% of our families are classes as 'financially stretched' falling into the 2 lowest Acorn Economic Measures of 'Urban Adversity' (25.4%) and 'Financially Stretched'(45.3).

13% of our pupils are from ethnic groups other than white British, this is an increase from 5% 4 years ago. (Data November 2024)

Teachers and support staff are all white, British females.

Overall aims of our Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes¹.

Our approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

Our vision statement about Equality

Blaydon West Primary School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning. We are committed to creating inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all.²

They are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child³.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education

² See *Appendix A* for further information about legislation

³ <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Education/Rights-Respecting-Schools-Award/Childrens-rights/>

- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school or school visits
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare

The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that governors, staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our governing body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing the Equality Policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP

Our pupils/students will:

- be involved in the development of the Equality Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the policy
- be encouraged to actively support the policy

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the Equality Policy
- have access to the policy through a range of different formats appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy
- be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of the Equality Policy
- be fully aware of the policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the policy
- identify any queries or training requirements

Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies will:

- Be involved in the development of the Equality Policy
- Be encouraged to support the policy
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy

How we developed our Policy - Participation and Involvement

The development of this policy has involved the whole of our school community. We've involved and listened to what they have to say, including people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities, taking account of all the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010

- Our pupils/students (Pupil surveys, school council, PSHE curriculum)
- Our staff (Staff questionnaires, Senior Leader Meetings, staff briefings and meetings)
- Our school governors (Identified Governor)
- Parents/carers (Parent surveys, newsletter)
- Minority, marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups
- Our partners in the community
- Ongoing:

How we developed our Policy - Using information

We have used data and other information about our school, and Equality analysis as a measure to determine the effects of a policy, practice or project on different groups. This approach helps us to analyse whether what we are planning potentially has a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). They help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. They help to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

We have taken a step-by-step approach to equality analysis as set out below:

1) Identifying who is responsible for the equality analysis

Equality analysis is an integral part of policy development. We have integrated it into day-to-day policy-making, business planning and other governance and corporate decision-making arrangements. This means that the person who is making the decision or advising the decision-maker about a policy undertakes the equality analysis, with appropriate assistance and support

2) Establishing relevance to equality

We ensure that all of our policies and practices, **both current and proposed**, have given proper consideration to equality. To begin with, this means checking all of our policies and practices for their relevance to equality issues.

3) Scoping our equality analysis

When we have decided that a policy is relevant to equality, scoping gives us an opportunity to establish basic systems that will be helpful for our equality analysis. Scoping involves looking at how the aims of the policy relate to equality and which aspects have particular importance to equality. It involves looking at which protected groups and which parts of the general equality duty it relates to. It includes looking at what evidence is available for our analysis, what the information gaps are, and establishing which stakeholders can usefully be engaged to support your analysis.

4) Analysing our equality information

Equality analysis is not simply about identifying and removing negative effects or discrimination, but it is also an opportunity to identify ways to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

We bring together all of our equality information in order to make a judgement about what the likely effect of the policy will be on equality, and whether we need to make any changes to the policy.

Example

We can have a positive impact on closing the gender pay gap by helping girls and boys consider non-traditional career choices.

5) Monitoring and review

Our equality analysis, and any engagement associated with it, helps us to anticipate and address the policy's likely effects on different groups. However, the actual effect of the policy will only be known once it has been introduced. We may find that we need to revise the policy if negative effects do occur. Area demographics can change, leading to different needs, alternative provision can become available or new options to reduce an adverse effect could become apparent. **Equality analysis is an ongoing process that does not end once a policy has been agreed or implemented.**

6) Decision-making and publication

Equality analysis is an ongoing process which follows the policy development and review cycle. Nevertheless, there is a stage prior to policy adoption where the equality analysis is considered 'complete' in the sense that it is sufficiently robust and detailed to properly inform decision-making. At this stage a senior member of staff signs off the analysis, including how it has been used to inform the policy and support decision-making.

In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways and other people help us to do this. (Parent and pupil surveys, Analyse School Performance incident reporting.

OfSTED inspectors report on equality issues during our inspection. We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, faith, disability and gender. Identified groups are tracked through school regarding academic and personal development.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil/learner voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

Commissioned services (buying in services)

Increasingly we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services. We work closely with the local authority on procurement – buying in services - to ensure that equality issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from

external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equality issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made⁴ or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment. (Remodelled building meets disability access requirements, 1:1 support for physically disabled pupil)

Our staff team have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development. (Training on Asthma, allergies, attachment disorder, dyslexia, SEN/InclusionL3 autism)

⁴ Unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work - for example ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capability to carry out the duties.

Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice –based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people, sexuality or sexism. We take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

See Anti-Bullying and Hate Incident Policies and Procedures, Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Implementation, monitoring and reviewing

This policy was published in March 2012 and reviewed in November 2024. It will be actively promoted and disseminated. (Newsletter, website, School Council)

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

Equality Objectives

Using the views of pupils, parents, staff, governors and community and equality analysis of the information as outlined above we have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be reviewed every 4 years. See Section 3.

Section 3

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES: 2024 - 2028

Link to Public Sector Equality Duty	Protected characteristic	Aim:	Objective:	Target group(s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff etc	Action:	Who's responsible ?	Dates from and to:	Milestone/progress:
All aims of duty	All protected characteristics	To increase pupil, staff and governors awareness of legal and human rights and the responsibilities that underpin society	For pupils to understand they have rights, how they can exercise their rights and understand how rights link to responsibilities	All pupils and staff	To disseminate information regarding The Rights of The Child (assemblies, governors' meetings, lessons)	Senior Leadership Team and Governors	2024- -	Purchased Jigsaw SOW Academic implemented across all classes
All aims of duty	All protected characteristics	To ensure the participation of pupils/students from minority, marginalised or vulnerable backgrounds in school life	Ensure the diversity of pupils/students involved in the decision-making processes of the school	Minority, marginalised and vulnerable pupils/students	Identify which groups are under-represented in the School Council and/or pupil voice processes within the school	HT	Nov 24 - July 2028	School council elected each year. Constituent monitored
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Race/ Religion or Belief/ Disability	To ensure the content of school meals and the eating environment meets the needs of all race and faith groups and those with specific health needs	Increased take up of school meals	All those with specific race, faith, cultural and health needs	Children with specific needs monitored	School caterers/cook Healthy School Lead	In place	Allergies training, Healthy School award working group. Religious groups offered alternative menu

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Sexual Orientation/Race/Gender identity/Disability/Religion or belief	To prevent and respond to all hate incidents and prejudiced based bullying	Students feel safer as reported in safer schools survey as feel incidents will be dealt with. Increased staff confidence Accurate reporting rates.	Whole school and specifically BME /LGBTU/SEND pupils/students or those from a Faith background	To review and update existing policies and practice relating to bullying in line with the review cycle or in response to issues Ongoing staff training. Ensure continuing professional development for staff to develop skills in identifying and challenging prejudice Assemblies/PSHE	SLT Anti-bullying lead	Ongoing	Policies updated as needed. Staff training provided by Clennel.
Advance equality of opportunity	Disability/ All	To increase social and emotional skills for identified pupils	Improved ability by pupils/students to handle difficult situations	Pupils/students with social and emotional difficulties	Nurture groups where needed	School Mental Health TA	Ongoing	Nurture groups.
Advance equality of opportunity	Sex	To promote opportunities for boys and girls to learn more about career opportunities which challenge gender stereotyping	Children are aware of different career opportunities	All pupils	Provide activities that allow pupils/students to explore different careers Aspirations work in curriculum – lessons, visits, visitors	All staff	Ongoing –	
Advance equality of opportunity	Other	To improve the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals	Improved attainment	Children eligible for free school meals	Collate and analyse data relating to attainment by target group Continue to identify and implement intervention strategies	SLT	Ongoing	Arbor MIS gives immediate data when required by staff.

Fostering good relations	Age	To improve understanding and to challenge stereotyping between young and older people	Increased positive attitudes towards each other	KS2	Visits to local residential home Planting in the community	Class teachers	Ongoing	Annual carol singing takes place
Fostering good relations	All	To promote good relations between people from different backgrounds	Improved understanding of Gateshead's community and the diversity within it Increased positive attitudes towards disabled people	All classes	Identify opportunities to look at local, national and global communities	SLT	Nov 2024 – July 2026	

Appendix A Key legislation

Equality Act 2010

Equality Act 2010

Harmonises and streamlines existing equality legislation into one Single Act.

The Act protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on 'protected characteristics':

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

This relates to:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

The Act also contains positive action provisions which enable schools to take proportionate action to address disadvantage faced by particular pupils. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged pupil group.

The Public Sector Equality Duty commenced in April 2011.

There are exceptions to enable single-sex schools to admit only pupils of one sex and for schools with a religious character to enable them to have admissions criteria which give preference to members of their own religion.

For more information:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/>

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/inclusionandlearnersupport/inclusion/equalityanddiversity/a0064570/the-equality-act-2010>

Accessibility planning

Accessibility planning is a statutory duty and can be incorporated into this policy. Schools must plan for:

- Increasing access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum
- Improving access to the physical environment of schools, and
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people

The first plans were required to be in place by April 2003. Therefore as schools come to review their accessibility plans they should consider building these actions into their Equality policy.

Community Cohesion – Education and Inspection Act 2006

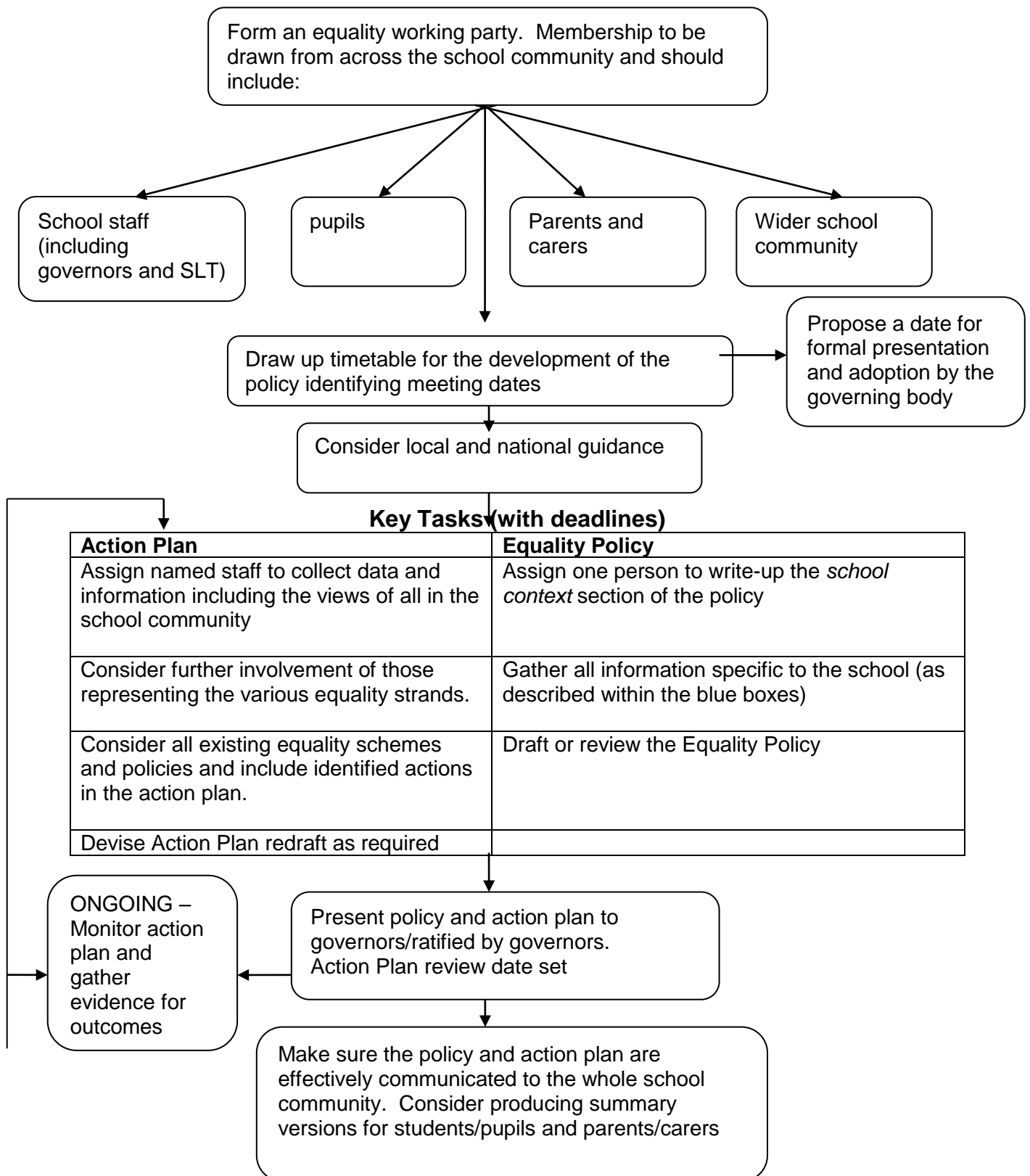
General duty

- To promote community cohesion

Specific duties

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – helping children to learn to understand others, to value diversity while also promoting shared values
- Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level
- Engagement and extended services – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations with different schools and communities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Appendix B Process chart for the development and review of Equality Policy and action plan



Appendix C School Council Equality and Diversity Session

Below is an hour and a half session devised to introduce the topic of Equality and Diversity to a school council and begin them thinking about contribution to an Equality Policy.

Time	Activity	More details	Things needed
10:00	Arrive and set up		
10:30	Welcome and Introductions Groundrules	All introduce selves and put on name labels Ask children to suggest some ground rules for session – shout out	Name labels Flipchart with ground rules written on markers
10:40	Icebreaker	Sunshine game, including some statements that are introducing diversity e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the sun shines on people who have a relative living abroad, the sun shines on people who have tried Chinese food Turn the seats round of a few, they still join in, feedback afterwards how that felt	Tables cleared to edge of room Circle of chairs
10:45	Participation game	Children stand on different squares depending on whether they agree/disagree with the following statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls are no good at sport All boys muck about in class All children should do as their told It's a good idea to have a school uniform Dyslexic children aren't very clever 	Participation game – grid drawn on floor or sheet with numbers in each square. Space clear in room for it
11:00	Discussion	Diversity What does diversity mean? – children shout out Expand, sum up and reveal definition Equality What does this mean? – children shout out Expand, sum up and reveal definition	Flipchart with a simple definition of diversity and equality written on it Equality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are all of equal value. Treating people fairly. Helping people to

			<p>overcome things that might hold them back.</p> <p>Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuing people's differences. • Trying to respect and understand people's differences.
11:05	'One of Us' clip – Traveller girl	Tell children is local young people sharing their experiences of times they have been treated unequally	'One Of Us' DVD, laptop, projector
11:10	Discussion	<p>Turn to the person next to you</p> <p>Can you think of time when you've been treated unfairly? Describe to your neighbour</p> <p>How did that make you feel?</p> <p>All come back together, children shout out a few feelings of how being treated unfairly makes them feel – write feelings on flipchart</p>	Flip chart markers
11:20	Laws/policy	<p>Explain that not everyone always treats people fairly, so we have laws to protect us, and others, so that every one feels welcome and has the same chances to do well in life.</p> <p>Explain school are writing a new policy and want the school councils' views to help with this.</p> <p>Are there things that happen in school that you think are unfair, can they think of things that happen in each area of the school that they'd like to change: play ground, lessons, assembly, afterschool and dinner time</p> <p>Use prompts if needed e.g only year 5/6 allowed to play football at lunch time</p>	Flipchart divided up into school areas and take notes of children's ideas
11:30	End	Agree a way to feedback school council views back to Equality working party	