

GENDER EQUALITY POLICY FOR RIVER VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Date of issue: July 2011

Reviewed: *September 2024*

Date of next review: *September 2025*



FOREWORD:

At River View Primary School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for staff, pupils and all those receiving services from the school, irrespective of gender. The achievement of all pupils and students will be monitored on the basis of gender and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.

We will aim to provide our pupils with a firm foundation which will enable them to fulfill their potential, regardless of gender or stereotypes. We will seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination against pupils and staff by adhering to our duties as an employer under the legislation. At River View Primary School we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

This policy outlines how we will promote the gender equality duty in our school and sets out our priority areas and action plan for the next 3 years.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The Equality Act (2010) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex Discrimination Act (1975). It added to the duty to eliminate sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, the duty to promote gender equality. This policy also takes into account gender reassignment as stated in section 7 of the Equality Act 2010.

SOCIAL CONTEXT

We understand that despite thirty years of individual legal rights to sex equality there is still widespread discrimination and persistent gender inequality. Both sexes suffer from the stereotyping of their roles and needs and such stereotyping has to be understood.

THE GENERAL DUTY

In accordance with our school's values, we welcome the statutory Gender Equality Duty. In compliance with the General Duty, River View Primary School has due regard for the need to, and works to:

- Eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination

- Eliminate sexual harassment
- Promote gender equality

By unlawful sexual discrimination we mean treating one person less favourably than another on grounds of sex or gender. We understand that this could be done directly but that it could also occur indirectly. Indirect discrimination means that a particular policy or practice may impact more negatively on one gender than on the other, or may favour one gender to the disadvantage of the other.

By sexual harassment we refer to behaviour or remarks based on a person's sex or gender, perceived to be unpleasant, threatening, offensive or demeaning to the dignity and self-esteem of the recipient or subject. We see such behaviour as also damaging to the perpetrator. (*refer further: our school's Behaviour/Anti-Bullying policy*)

We understand 'sex' to refer to the biological differences between males and females and 'gender' to refer to the wider social roles and responsibilities which structure our lives. By promoting gender equality our intention is to recognize and help overcome those lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage which are based on socially ascribed gender stereotypes and assumptions.

We understand that in some circumstances it may be appropriate to treat girls and boys, and women and men differently, if that action is aimed at overcoming previous, current or possible future disadvantage.

We also recognize gender reassignment as anyone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender is protected from discrimination under the Equality Act. A person does not need to be undergoing medical supervision to be protected. So, for example, a woman who decides to live as a man without undergoing any medical procedures would be covered.

We will take steps to counteract the effects of any past discrimination in staff recruitment. Where we are uncertain whether there is a genuine occupational requirement for preference to be given to the employment of someone of a particular gender we will seek specialist advice.

We understand the three parts of the duty to be different, but that they should normally support each other. However, we are aware that achieving one may not lead to achieving all three.

In taking due regard we will exercise the principles of proportionality and relevance. By this we mean that the weight we give to gender equality will be proportionate to its relevance to a particular function. The greater the relevance of a function to gender equality, the greater regard we will pay to it.

THE SPECIFIC DUTIES

We welcome the responsibility to think and act more strategically about gender equality. To meet the specific duties, and guided by the Code of Practice prepared by the Equal Opportunities Commission, we have prepared, published and implemented, and will maintain, a Gender Equality Action Plan which contains our current objectives. This is attached to and forms an essential part of this policy.

We are working to develop our understanding of the major gender equality issues in our school's functions and services. In order to do this we:

- Collect and analyse school data and other gender equality relevant information, including data about our local area
- Consult all staff, pupils, parents and relevant local communities
- Review all our school policies and practices to assess the ways in which they might impact on gender equality
- Ensure governors, staff, pupils, parents and others in our school are accountable and understand their responsibilities with regard to preventing discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality
- Address any issues arising within the context of school and challenge a range of discrimination – including those relating to persons who may be undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment
- Assess and address the causes of any gender pay gap
- Publish and implement the Action Plan with our proposed objectives and actions

We will:

- Set out the results of reviews, consultations and impact assessments
- Report on progress and set further objectives where necessary
- Review and revise the Policy and Action Plan at least every three years

All governors, staff, volunteers, pupils and their families need to develop an appropriate understanding of, and act in accordance with, the school's Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan. In addition:

The school governors are responsible for ensuring that the School prepares, publishes, implements, reports on and reviews a Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (including budget requirements), and in particular the employment implications of meeting the Duty.

The Head Teacher works with the SLT to ensure that –

- the Policy and Action Plan are implemented
- staff recruitment, training opportunities and conditions promote gender equality
- all staff, pupils and their parents are consulted regarding, and are aware of the school's responsibilities to meet, the Gender Equality Duty
- existing and planned policies are assessed for the ways in which they impact on gender equality
- curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, school journeys and extended school activities take account of the need to promote gender equality
- incidents of sexual/gender bullying or harassment are dealt with according to our Behaviour/Anti-Bullying policy
- visitors to the school, or those who use the premises, are aware of the Gender Equality policy and action plan

All staff have a responsibility to deal with incidents of sexual harassment or bullying; help eliminate unlawful discrimination; prepare and/or help deliver a curriculum, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, school journeys and extended school activities (including work with parents) that take account of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote gender equality.

Pupils and parents have a proportionate responsibility to understand and act in accordance with the policy, as do **visitors** to the school.

These and other responsibilities are outlined in detail in our Gender Equality Action Plan which is attached to and forms part of this policy.

We believe that, even having the Equal pay Act of 1970 and the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, there is still widespread discrimination and gender inequality in society. We believe that having this gender equality policy and action plan will:

- support us in our decision-making and policy development
- give us a clearer understanding of the needs of staff, pupils and their families
- enable us to provide better quality services which meet varied needs
- help us target our resources more effectively
- help promote increased confidence in our school
- make more effective use of our workforce

We recognise that both sexes can suffer from sexual stereotyping and that sometimes the same policies and practices can impact differently on men and women and boys and girls. We will make appropriate adjustments if this is found to be the case with any of our policies and practices.

We also recognise that girls and boys, and women and men, can experience different forms of discrimination depending on, among other things; their ethnicity, belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or disability and we will take this complexity into consideration. In these ways we will strive to improve the situation for, and the relationships between, men and women and boys and girls within our school and wider community.

SINGLE SEX PROVISION (WHERE RELEVANT)

Where we provide for one sex only, this is to help meet the different needs of boys and girls (men and women), needs often arising out of historical and current stereotyping and unjust gender discrimination, or where there is an issue of physical intimacy or embarrassment to be considered. We do not provide activities, classes, facilities, benefits or services for one sex only if this would amount to less favourable treatment of the other sex, or where it would promote gender stereotyping and gender inequality. We do not deny one sex the same opportunities as the other and where we provide for one sex only we ensure there are equivalent and proportionate facilities, benefits or services for the other sex. We do not offer different curriculum choices to boys and girls, and where there are curriculum options we ensure that these are not offered in such a way that boys and girls are steered into making choices based on gender stereotypes. If requests for additional single sex activities, facilities or provision which appear to maintain or promote gender inequalities come from pupils, families or the community, these will be considered and legal advice sought.

We understand that eliminating gender discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality is in part an education function and a matter of cultural change. Where possible, breaches of the policy will be dealt with in a manner appropriate to the level of the breach, and with the intention of bringing about the relevant changes. More serious breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our school's anti-bullying and harassment procedures, and the disciplinary procedures for staff. Where safeguarding issues based on sex and gender come to the attention of the school these will be dealt with according to our child protection procedures.

Copies of this policy are available in the office and on request.

We will continue, as outlined in our action plan, to develop awareness of what constitutes unlawful gender discrimination and harassment, and of the need to eliminate this and to promote gender equality.

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. The plan is also available by e-mail, or in an enlarged print version, on request to the head teacher.

Signed:

Chair of Governors, River View Primary School

Date: January 2016

Gender Equality Policy review date: September 2025

Gender Equality Action Plan follows & attaches to this policy

Gender reassignment is a personal, social, and sometimes medical process by which a person's gender appears to others to have changed. Anyone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender is protected from discrimination under the Equality Act. A person does not need to be undergoing medical supervision to be protected. So, for example, a woman who decides to live as a man without undergoing any medical procedures would be covered.

KEY POINTS

There are four types of discrimination.

DIRECT DISCRIMINATION

Is when someone is treated differently and not as well as other people because of their gender reassignment. It breaks down into three different sorts of direct discrimination or treating someone 'less favourably' because of:

- their own gender reassignment (direct discrimination)
- a perception that they are undergoing gender reassignment (direct discrimination by perception)
- their association with someone who has changed their gender (direct discrimination by association).

INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION

Can occur where a workplace rule, practice or procedure is applied to all workers, but disadvantages people who want to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment. An example might be a rule or policy that makes individuals say if they have undergone gender reassignment.

HARASSMENT

When unwanted conduct related to gender reassignment causes a distressing, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

VICTIMISATION

Treating an employee unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint about gender reassignment discrimination.

It is discrimination to treat transgendered, or trans, people less favourably for being absent from work because they want to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.

Employers should ensure they have rules in place which help to prevent discrimination in:

- recruitment and selection
- determining pay
- training and development
- selection for promotion
- discipline and grievances
- countering bullying and harassment
- taking time off work.

EMPLOYERS CAN SUPPORT TRANS PEOPLE AT WORK THROUGH:

Good Communication - Through the company rules, practices and procedures ensure that there are clear statements about the acceptance and support for different forms of gender identity and expression. Make it clear to staff, clients and customers that discrimination, harassment and victimisation because of gender reassignment are unlawful.

Support for individuals undergoing gender transitions - Discuss with the person how they would like their colleagues to be told about their transition. Some trans people may feel comfortable talking about their transition with colleagues, but others may prefer not to.

Confidentiality - At a time agreed with the person, all personal records should be changed to the new name and gender. Access to personal records which state a person's previous gender should be retained only if necessary, and otherwise deleted or destroyed.

EMPLOYEES SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT THEY CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

Telling people about the situation. Make a list of the people who need to know. Speak to them personally, or ask HR or a line manager to communicate with them.

Medical appointments and absences. Make sure the employer knows about what time off work will be needed. Remember that it is discrimination for an employer to treat a person worse if they are absent from work for a reason related to gender reassignment than you would be treated if you were absent because you are ill or injured, or if you were absent for some other reason.

Changing e mail, work passes etc. Changing name on email addresses, company directories, records and work pass will need to be done. Speak to the HR department at an early stage about how this should be done.

APPENDIX 2 - ACTION PLAN

Priority	Action Required	Success Criteria	Timescale	Responsible Person (s)
Narrow the achievement gap between boys and girls	<p>Staff training and staff meetings include engagement of low attaining group</p> <p>Analysis of attainment data; incl. Pupil Progress Meetings</p> <p>Moderation activities to ensure attainment across the genders is in line</p>	Attainment gaps are narrowed as a result of the impact of training, moderation and data analysis on teaching and learning opportunities	Sept 2015 – July 2016	All staff – monitored by senior leaders in school
Increase the % of boys meeting age-related expectations in reading	<p>Close analysis of progression and attainment</p> <p>Incentive and reward schemes for improved reading</p>	Children identified and action plan developed to improve outcomes for boys' reading	Sept 2015 – July 2016	AHT with responsibility for reading

	Audit and ensure reading matter meets interest and need for targeted reluctant readers			
Ensure boys in Reception reach a good level of development	Analysis of data and moderation of work Quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or better	% of boys achieving GLD improves on previous year	Sept 2015 – July 2016	AHT with responsibility for EYs
Consultation of parents and pupils	Consultation with parents to include monitoring of gender responses Ensure questions include questions relating to gender equality Appropriate ratio of boy:girl	Information gathered and information used to prioritise action	Sept 2015 onwards	Leadership Team

	questioning to be undertaken			
Consultation of staff and governors	<p>Staff meetings to focus on approaches to consistently supporting all genders</p> <p>Inequalities to be addressed as part of staff meetings and governors meetings</p> <p>Make up of any consultation board or panel to have a sufficient male:female ratio</p>	<p>Information gathered and information used to prioritise action</p> <p>Focus of the make-up of consultation groups, board meetings etc to reflect balanced ratio of gender</p>	September 2015 onwards	Senior Leaders and Governing Board
Equal involvement of each gender in all sporting activities.	<p>Registers kept and gender imbalances addressed by promotion of sport to the minority.</p> <p>Inter school teams</p>	Representation of each gender attending all clubs and sporting events.	Ongoing – Reviewed Feb each year.	<p>Sports Coaches with DHT to support</p> <p>Registers collected by PE coordinator.</p>

	must contain representatives from all genders.			
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