

# Policy for the promotion of Diversity, Equality & Community Cohesion

This policy was formulated as a result of consultation between the Head Teacher, Representative of Governors, teaching staff and members of the Parent and Friends Group, in consultation with pupil representatives from the School Council.

The draft policy was disseminated to staff, and interested parents/carers, and approved by governors Autumn Term 2007

## 1. Description of the school & its locality

Winterton Junior School is one of three schools in the small town of Winterton, the others being the Infant and Comprehensive Schools. Some children from small neighbouring villages travel to the school on the School Bus. There are three other village schools which feed the Comprehensive School making up the Winterton School Cluster.

## 2. School ethos, vision & values

We believe that children should have a safe and stimulating environment in which to develop their awareness and knowledge of the world. We believe that education should be broad based and that the development of positive attitudes and skills is fundamental to learning. We believe that the school has a major role in encouraging children to care, to question and to strive to do the best possible. This involves the development of social skills and respect for others alongside the development of self esteem and self control.

We want our children to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable, and for their learning to be balanced and thorough. Our aim is to produce children who are interested, active, prepared and able to think for themselves, who show consideration for others, and who make a positive contribution to the community in which they live.

This policy will help the school to create a fair and just school community that:

- Respects diversity
- Promotes social inclusion, community cohesion and equality
- Promotes, upholds and acts upon the principles of Race Equality, Disability Rights and Gender Equality and community cohesion
- Acts on all inequality, harassment and discrimination including bullying in all its many forms

### 2.1 What do we understand by Diversity?

Our school provides an education for all, acknowledging that the society we live in is enriched by its diversity. We work hard to foster an understanding and tolerance of each other with our different ways of seeing and doing things, to prepare and equip children and young people for life and work in the wider society and foster a common sense of belonging. The school strives to ensure that its culture and ethos reflects the diversity of all the members of the school community where everyone is equally valued, and treats everyone with respect and fairness. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

### 2.2 School's Strategic Priorities

We accept the findings of the Stephen Lawrence and the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Reports with particular reference to the collective failure of organisations to provide appropriate and professional services to people because of colour, culture or ethnic origin.

MacPherson : 'It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amounts to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people'.

We recognise the damaging consequences of services not working together to provide social justice and healing. We acknowledge the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry definition of a racist incident as "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".

We recognise that all pupils may experience bullying or harassment and in tackling these issues in school, we use the same definition that such an incident is perceived to be bullying or harassment by the victim or another person, until proven otherwise. We abide by and respect the law of the country, and policies within our own school. These policies are designed to bring out the best in each pupil and in the adults who work

within the school community, exemplifying the values we uphold which relate to the five outcomes of Every Child Matters, of being safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

Parents, carers and governors are encouraged to be fully involved within the life of the school and in the communication of basic beliefs, principles and values, which the school strives to promote through the education of its children and young people.

We acknowledge that schools like the rest of society are made up of individuals who hold a spectrum of shared and also differing values, beliefs and opinions. Some of these may be based on prejudice and may be discriminating. The school will not tolerate harassment or bigotry of any kind and we are committed to combating all forms of discrimination. The school works to eliminate all forms of personal discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexuality and sexual orientation (known or perceived), age, religion and belief. We believe all pupils, employees and other service users should be treated with dignity and respect at all times and we will not tolerate bullying, harassment or victimisation of any groups or individuals. We recognise that monitoring and evaluation of equality is essential to ensure pupils are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning with an outcomes focus.

The school intends to have a workforce, which reflects the North Lincolnshire Policy on Diversity at all levels of its organisation. We aim to be an inclusive employer that positively identifies and values the contribution of all its employees. Through our employment policies and strategies, we aim to achieve equality for all sections of the workforce and the community we serve.

### **3. The current legal duties for schools and their governing bodies - Roles and responsibilities**

**Race Equality** - Having a race equality policy has been a legal requirement in schools since May 2002. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 imposes a positive duty on schools to promote race equality.

The general duty includes:

- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination
- Promoting good relations between people of different racial groups.

Specific duties for Schools: The Law says that a Governing Body must

- Prepare and maintain a race equality policy
- Develop an implementation plan
- Assess the impact of policies and procedures on pupils, staff and parents
- Monitor and review the operation of such policies and procedures in particular their impact on the attainment levels of black or ethnic minority pupils
- Monitor the school workforce by ethnicity. Monitor applicants, those short-listed, and those appointed by ethnicity. Monitor internal appointments by ethnicity.

**Disability Equality** - The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 introduces general & specific duties for schools:

The general duties are:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and non-disabled persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that are directly related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled person's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably

Specific duties include:

- The development of a Disability Equality Scheme that provides a framework to assist schools in planning, delivering, evaluating and reporting on their activities to ensure they comply with the general duty
- A associated action plan that shows the steps over a three year period of how the school will meet the general duty

**Gender Equality** - The Equality Act of 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to place statutory duty on all public authorities (including schools) when carrying out their functions and, to have due regard to the need to:

General duty:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Promote Equality of opportunity between men and women

Specific duties require each school to:

- Prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme showing how it intends to fulfil its general and specific duties and setting out its gender equality objectives
- Consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap in formulating overall objectives
- Gather and use information on how the school's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services
- Consult stakeholders and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender and equality objectives
- Assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality [on men and women, boys and girls]\*
- Implement the actions set out in its scheme within three years
- Report against the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years

*\*The Gender Equality Duty and Schools – Guidance for public authorities in England published in March 2007 defines in detail the meaning of 'scheme' and 'objective' in the context of Gender Equality.*

The general duty came into effect for all schools in April 2007

## 2.4 Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation and Age regulations

**Religion or belief** - The Equality Act 2006 introduced legislation in relation to the provision of education by prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief. Religion or belief includes any religion, which has a clear structure or belief system, whilst belief is defined as any religious or philosophical belief. Any lack of religion or belief is also covered by these phrases. Schools are encouraged to be familiar with present employment regulations and admission procedures as they relate to their particular establishments and where there may be exceptions to allow discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief. The new laws also relate to all services provided by schools, extended schools and those schools that are at the hub of the new children's centres. Parents, other service users, and visitors will also be entitled to protection under the 'goods, services and facilities' aspects of the legislation.

**Sexual orientation** - The Equality Act 2006 has harmonised legislation in relation to the provision of goods, facilities and services by prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, including perception of sexual orientation. This legislation compliments legislation introduced in 2003 that makes it unlawful to treat people less favourably because of their real or perceived sexual orientation in employment. Issues such as how the curriculum reflects religion or belief and sexuality including sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-sexual issues), would be an important part of the school's planning and improvement agenda.

Incidents relating to religion or belief, sexuality or sexual orientation will be recorded in a designated incident book and reported to Governors and the Local Education Authority as required. Failure to deal with faith related bullying or harassment between pupils or staff will be unlawful under the new regulations. Making sure the school is a safe place for all pupils and staff whose actual or perceived sexual orientation is the focus for bullying or other unwanted treatment will now be a legal requirement and also a subject of OFSTED inspections

**Age discrimination legislation** - This was introduced from October 2006 The Law says that people cannot be discriminated against due to their age. The regulations will affect us all and cover people of all ages, both old and young. The new regulations aim to tackle assumptions about capability or fitness of someone based purely on their age and to counter age myths. The main areas legislation will impact on are:

- Recruitment and selection
- Harassment and dignity at work
- Training and promotion during employment
- Retirement

Harassment, victimisation, or unjustifiable exclusion from training on the grounds of age will now be unlawful.

### Community cohesion

Community Cohesion goes beyond traditional issues of race equality and is about all kinds of relationships within communities. Schools have a strategic role in not only promoting cohesive communities and removing barriers but in preventing or limiting damage to those community relations.

For schools the term 'community' has the following of dimensions

- The school community - the children and young people it serves, their parents, carers and families, the school staff and governing body, and the community users of the school's facilities and services;
- The community in which the school is located - the school in its geographical community and

the people who live and work in that area. This applies not just to the immediate neighbourhood but also to the city or local authority area within which the school is located;

- The UK community – all schools are by definition part of this community;
- The global community – formed by EU and international links

Community Cohesion was introduced under section 23A(6) of the Education Act 2002, identifying the critical roles schools play in:

- Helping to create cohesive communities
- Breaking down barriers between young people
- Sharing the aims and objectives of tackling discrimination and inequality
- Sharing the aims and objective of closing attainment and achievement gaps
- Developing common values of citizenship based on dialogue, mutual respect, acceptance and diversity.

Examples of some of the ways this is addressed in **Winterton Junior School** :-

- Promotion of the School as a community both in the Curriculum and in the wider school arena such as Assemblies, Achievement Assembly, special days
- Rigorous scrutiny of pupil performance on an individual and group basis
- School Council
- Out of School Hours Learning provision
- Parents and Friends Group
- Promotion of Extended Services Agenda
- Involvement of School in local events, e.g. Winterton Show, Scunthorpe Music and Drama Festival.
- Taking part in national days of celebration e.g. World Book Day, Samaritans Purse and other charitable events
- Link with Songlin School in China
- Multicultural Day
- Spanish Club

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002 introducing a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion. OFSTED inspections of the contribution schools make to community cohesion will commence in September 2008.

Broadly, School's contributions to community cohesion can be grouped under the three following headings:

- Teaching, learning and the curriculum
- Equity and excellence
- Engagement and extended services

3.2 The school recognises the partnership role of the Local Authority and its statutory duty in combating inequality. We understand our duty to collect and inform the Authority of all racist and other diversity-related incidents on a termly basis and immediately in the case of more serious incidents. We will also share this information each term with the Governing Body and annually report to our parents and carers.

#### **4. The school's principles**

In order for children and young people to succeed at school, we must first of all challenge all forms of personal discrimination against individuals, especially those who are perceived as 'different' or outsiders; and any discrimination against any groups of people based on group stereotype. Staff and pupils must constantly challenge any behaviour that violates the rights of individuals and which leads to marginalisation, exclusion and feelings of powerlessness and worthlessness because of their individual identities, or from other's perceptions of belief systems or organisations to which they belong.

We aim to be a listening school. We will try to listen to all our community members including pupils, staff, parents and carers, visitors, wider community members, stakeholders and partners.

We take seriously all experiences of bullying and hurtful behaviour and invite all our pupils in particular to talk to us about bullying, who is doing it, where it is taking place and what it involves.

We are a learning organisation, which recognises the contributions of all pupils, staff, parents and other partners to creating a better school, which is supportive, fair, just and free from discrimination

From here we will:

- Develop an equality, diversity and community cohesion strategy that includes all equality standards and outcomes linked targets and actions within the school development plan
- Promote equality by assessing the impact of our policies on different groups within the school community
- Give a high profile to the rights and responsibilities of each individual by promoting human rights, justice and fairness both through the school curriculum and wider pastoral and community activities

- Challenge and eradicate discrimination and have a comprehensive policy for dealing with bullying in all its many forms which is aimed at groups as well as individuals, and with understanding of the particular effects accruing from different types of bullying and discrimination: for the victim, the perpetrator and the school community as a whole
- Promote community cohesion, for example involvement in twinning and partnership projects and the use and demonstration of local skills
- Develop and support a workforce that seeks to reflect at all levels the resident community of N. Lincs.
- Work in partnership and consult with pupils, staff, parents, carers and the wider community and stakeholders to develop good practice, leading to an agenda of respect, tolerance and fairness within our community
- Review and audit all our equality, diversity and cohesion activities and have an outcomes focus for future activity in the field of equality, diversity and community cohesion.

## 5. The learning environment

'The curriculum for all maintained schools should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life' - *Education Act 2002 Section 78*

We understand that education is the key to creating a just society which values all the people living and working in it. We aim to create a learning environment where all learners irrespective of their cultural or personal identities and abilities have an equal right to develop and achieve to their full potential. We understand that:

- Education curriculum must have a broad global perspective, which validates worldwide contributions to knowledge and civilisations from both men and women, the able bodied and the disabled
- Education must help pupils to understand and reflect on the social and economic processes, which have led to prejudice against minority groups and social factors that are associated with racial and other forms of harassment and discrimination.
- Education is concerned with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values and beyond these inspiration and vision for the type of environments we would like to live in. All those involved in education in our school must have a clear understanding of the Every Child Matters Agenda at all stages, and the non-discriminatory attitudes and values to be developed in children, through the educational opportunities and experiences offered.
- All children have the right to a good education and to feel safe in the school and its environment in order to enjoy and achieve
- Social, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity and the talents of individuals, male or female are strengths to be utilised by teachers and educators in enriching and enhancing children's learning.
- The way in which children learn to speak and to communicate are intrinsic to personal and cultural identity. The languages and dialects used in the home by children are recognised and valued in school.
- All our learners need to develop and have access to a good standard of English, which is the main medium of instruction in our school.
- Pupils have the right to reliable information they can understand from the use of different types of media information and communication. In classrooms in this school we aim to ensure the proper use of Information Technology and media information and that there is no promotion of material harmful to children and young people.
- Education is a partnership between the school and our parents and carers. We recognise the existence of complementary expertise and knowledge and provide opportunities for parents and other partners to share their knowledge and experiences but also appreciate the values underpinning education.
- Any policy for children and young people with special educational needs or disability must demonstrate commitment to pupil participation, parent partnership, special resources allocation and curriculum access. Some of our outcomes for children with special educational needs link directly with the disability, gender and race equality dimensions of our Diversity Policy
- A shared perspective is important for the promotion of equality, diversity and community cohesion and social inclusion and is the foundation of good teaching and learning.

### 5.1 The community and community cohesion

By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued: a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all. By community cohesion, we mean a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

Clear objectives and timescales will be set for the implementation of the community aspect of our Diversity Policy. Partnerships with parents and carers, governors, all stakeholders and the wider community are

central to school strategies and essential to the implementation of our Diversity Policy and School Improvement Plan.

## 6. Staff

The school adopts the local Authority's advice and guidance through its Human Resources policies for fair advertising, recruitment, selection, training and retention of staff. The school recognises all staff have the right to work in a safe and harassment free environment, the right to career advancement pathways and that staff have individual and collective responsibility to respect each other's contributions regardless of age or experience.

## 7. Equality and diversity targets and objectives

We will develop equality and diversity targets and objectives within the School Development plan to ensure that equality and diversity are central to our every day work in ensuring the best education and personal development for all our learners.

We will ensure that planning, delivering and monitoring strategies and equality and diversity issues are considered in relation to ongoing work and at the outset of any new work in the school, and that we will consult with pupils, parents and carers, staff, partners and where appropriate with the wider community.

## 8. Monitoring and impact assessment

We consistently aim to ensure that arrangements are in place for monitoring and assessing the impact of policies and procedures, functions and practices in the school on pupils, especially in relation to pupil attainment, but also on staff, on parents and carers and the wider community. The following are examples of the type of questions we ask:

- a) Are there any adverse effects on pupils staff or parents from particular racial groups, or on girls/boys, or on pupils with disabilities or impairments?
- b) Are any staff prevented from reaching their full potential?
- c) Are any parents or carers deterred from taking part fully in the life of the school?
- d) Does the school help pupils to achieve as much as they can and get the most of what is on offer, based on their individual needs?
- e) How does the school explain any differences? Are the explanations justified? Can they be justified on non-racial grounds (or on grounds not related to gender or disability etc) such as English language difficulties?
- f) Do policies' aims lead to action to deal with any differences that have been identified on an individual or group basis?
- g) Do policies help the school raise standards and promote equality of opportunity for pupils who are underachieving and who need extra support?
- h) Do policies help the school to promote the values of living in a diverse society; promote race equality and social harmony; respect and value personal difference; prevent and deal with bullying, harassment or bigotry in any of their many forms?
- i) Is the action the school takes following policy decisions, inclusive and appropriate and effective?
- j) What changes does the school need to make to any of its policies? To answer these questions the school will employ a variety of strategies including collecting and analysing amounts of data; talking to pupils, parents/carers and staff to find out their needs and opinions; carrying out surveys and special research. The results will influence and guide our planning and decision-making, aims and objectives within the Diversity Policy and the School Development Plan. A timetable will be drawn up, and we will demonstrate the ways in which we have assessed and prioritised the impact or likely impact of existing and new policies on all members of the school community. Action plans resulting from information gathered will be reviewed on a three yearly basis

## 9. Publishing and reporting on outcomes

The school will take reasonable steps to publish results of its reviewing and monitoring each year in the three yearly cycle. As far as is practicable we report on how we are going to use any information gathered and the effectiveness of diversity targets whether they relate to Race, Gender, Disability or the Community.

Review date:

Senior Member of Staff Responsible: .....

Governor Responsible: .....