



Tenterfields Primary Academy

Equality Policy May 2018

Equality Policy 2018	
Responsible Committee:	Tenterfields Academy LAB
Date Revised by Headteacher	May 2018
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Schools Requirements under the Equality Act 2010

This guidance applies to all schools, including academies and will also be of interest to governing bodies.

Equality Act 2010

From 1st October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 replaced existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act.

As far as schools are concerned there are some changes, but for the most part the effect of the law is the same as it has been in the past – schools which are already complying with the law will not find major differences in what they need to do. However, there are some additional duties with which schools need to comply and some of the duties have been extended to cover other groups.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment or training and the provision of services on the basis of what it calls 'protected characteristics'. There are a few differences in the way the law applies to different protected characteristics e.g. marriage and civil partnership applies only in employment or training. Protected characteristics are:

- age,
- sex,
- race,
- disability,
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment,
- pregnancy or maternity
- marriage or civil partnership

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a general Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) that applies to public bodies, including maintained schools and Academies, and which extends to all protected characteristics (marriage or civil partnership only the first element).

This general duty came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Complying with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010

Schools need to make sure that their policies and activities comply with the Equality Act and the PSED. Carrying out 'equality impact assessments' or 'equality analysis' to look at how policies and activities impact on different protected characteristics can help schools to comply.

The Government has also introduced new specific duties, which are intended to help public authorities (including schools) to meet their obligations under the PSED.

The specific duties regulations require schools (by 6 April 2012):

- a) to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and
- b) to prepare and publish equality objectives.

Schools need to update the published information at least annually and publish objectives at least once every four years. Schools with fewer than 150 employees do not need to publish information on their employees.

Under specific duties set out in previous equality legislation, schools were required to produce equality schemes in relation to race, disability and gender. Under the new specific duties there are no requirements to create equality schemes. But schools may choose to continue producing such a scheme, if it helps them to comply with the Equality Duty, and they can expand it to cover the additional protected characteristics.

Publishing Information

The government is clear that the new duties should not be overly burdensome on schools. Schools will not be required by the government to collect any statistical data which they do not already collect routinely. A large amount of data is already collected by schools - RAISE online.



It is also important to note that the published information does not necessarily have to be statistical data. Many other kinds of information can be used to show how the school is promoting equality, such as publishing its policies online, or publishing minutes of Governors' meetings.

It will be up to schools themselves to decide in what format they publish equality information. For most schools, the simplest approach may be to set up an equalities page on their website where all this information is present or links to it are available. The regulations are not prescriptive and it will be entirely up to schools to decide how they publish the information, so long as it is accessible to those members of the school community and the public who want to see it and it is sufficient to demonstrate compliance with the duty.

Equality Objectives

Schools are free to choose the equality objectives that best suit their individual circumstances and contribute to the welfare of their pupils and the school community. Objectives are not intended to be burdensome or a 'tick box' exercise, but they do need to be specific and measurable. They should be used as a tool to help improve the school experience of a range of different pupils. A school should set as many objectives as it believes are appropriate to its size and circumstances; the objectives should fit the school's needs and should be achievable.

Equality objectives may arise from analysis schools have carried out on their published data or other information, where they have identified an area where there is potential for improvement on equalities, or they may – for example - be set in anticipation of a change in local circumstances. Some examples might be:

- to increase participation by black pupils in after school activities;
- to narrow the gap in performance of disabled pupils;
- to reduce exclusion rates for black boys;
- to increase understanding between religious groups;
- to reduce the number of homophobic incidents;
- to raise attainment in English for boys;
- to encourage girls to consider non-stereotyped career options;
- to anticipate the needs of incoming pupils from a new group, such as traveller children.

Further and more extensive guidance is available of the Department for Education website at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf