

# Milldene Primary School

# Equality and Accessibility Plan



*"Living and learning together"*

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## **1. Mission statement**

At Milldene we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Milldene, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

## **2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice**

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

### **Teaching and learning**

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data 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;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

### **Admissions and exclusions**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

## **3. Equal Opportunities for Staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Milldene Primary School.

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions 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.

### **Employer duties**

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

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

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;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

### **4. Equality and the law: The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws (concerning race, disability and gender) with a single Act. It simplifies the law, removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with it. The Act also strengthens the law in important ways to help tackle discrimination and inequality. Most of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010 and it applies to the School leaders, staff and its Governing Body.

Broadly as far as schools are concerned, the effect of the Act is the same as it has been in the past – meaning that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils or staff. Schools that were already complying with the previous equality legislation should not find major differences in what they will need to do.

#### **The ‘protected characteristics’**

The Act protects people from discrimination on the basis of nine ‘protected characteristics’. These are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race, including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Discrimination on the basis of work pattern (e.g. part-time working, fixed term contract) which is unjustifiable will also not be tolerated.

#### *Disability*

The protected characteristic of disability applies to a person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal, day to day activities. To qualify for protection from discrimination, a disabled person no longer has to show that their impairment affects a particular capacity (such as mobility or eyesight). Where however unfavourable treatment of a disabled person can be justified by showing the treatment was intended to meet a legitimate objective in a fair, balanced and reasonable way, the treatment will not be unlawful.

## *Gender Reassignment*

The protected characteristic of gender reassignment applies to a person who is proposing to undergo, or is undergoing or has undergone a process to change their sex. To qualify for protection from discrimination a transsexual person no longer has to show that they are under medical supervision.

## *Direct Discrimination*

The law prohibits direct discrimination in services and public functions. Direct discrimination happens when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic. Direct discrimination covers disability. Direct discrimination can also occur when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic even though that person does not have that characteristic but is treated less favourably because they are linked or associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. Further, direct discrimination can also occur when a person is wrongly thought to have a particular protected characteristic or is treated as if they do.

## *Indirect Discrimination*

Indirect discrimination happens when there is a rule, policy or even practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people who share a particular protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination will only be lawful if it can be shown that the rule, policy or practice is intended to meet a legitimate objective in a fair, balanced and reasonable way.

## *Harassment*

If someone is harassed because of their protected characteristic and in consequence, treated less favourably than someone else, this counts as unlawful direct discrimination.

## *Victimisation*

If someone is victimised or treated badly as a result of reasonably and fairly making or supporting a complaint, for example, about discrimination, that treatment is unlawful.

## *The Public Sector Equality Duty*

The Act introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which applies to the School and which extends to all the 9 protected characteristics listed above. This duty came into effect 1 April 2010. It has 3 main elements. In carrying out their functions, the school leaders, staff and governors are required to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination** (i.e. harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act);
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having due regard means, consciously thinking about the three aims above in the process of decision-making. This means that consideration of all equality issues must influence the decisions reached by the school and its governors, such as how they develop, evaluate and review policy; how they design deliver and evaluate services offered.

Having due regard to advancing equality of opportunity involves thinking about the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Meeting the needs of those with protected characteristics and
- Encouraging people with protected characteristics to take part in public life.

Fostering good relations includes tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between those with protected characteristics and those without.

Complying with the new PSED may result in some people being treated better than others as far as this is allowed by discrimination law. For example, it may involve making use of the new positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way which is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic. Such measure will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim, for example, providing special catch-up classes for Roma children or a project to engage specifically with alienated Asian boys.

Implementing the PSED means that the School should ensure:

**Knowledge:** those making decisions are aware of and comply with the Equality Duty;

**Timeliness:** the Equality Duty must be complied with before and at the time the decision or policy is made;

**Real consideration:** the Equality Duty is not a tick-box exercise: it must be exercised as a matter of substance.

**Sufficient information** must be available to comply with the Equality Duty.

**No delegation** – the School must ensure that any third parties exercising functions on the School's behalf are capable of complying with the Equality Duty.

**Review** – the Equality Duty is a continuing duty and compliance with it must be kept under review.

#### **Publication of Equality Information**

It is up to schools to decide in what format they publish equality information. The simplest approach may be to set up an equalities page on their website where all relevant information is kept or links to it are available. The key requirement is that the information is accessible to those members of the school community and the public who want to see it.

#### **Equality Objectives**

Schools must have equality objectives but are free to choose those that best suit their individual circumstances and contribute to the welfare of their pupils and the school community. The objectives should be specific and measurable. The objectives are likely to arise from an analysis of the school's published information where areas for improvement have been identified. Examples are:

- Narrowing the gap in performance of disabled pupils
- Increase understanding between religious and ethnic groups
- Raise attainment in English for boys
- Encouraging girls and boys to consider non-stereotyped career options

Our school also aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- 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.

## **Auxiliary Aids**

In due course, the Act will extend the reasonable adjustment duty applicable to disabled pupils to provide auxiliary aids and services to such pupils. This duty is due to come into effect at a later date following consultation on implementation and approach. This Plan will be updated accordingly.

Health related questions for job applicants

It is unlawful for employers to ask health related questions of applicants before job offer unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work. Therefore, applicants cannot be required to fill in a generic health questionnaire as part of the application process.

## **Community Cohesion**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion.

Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

## **5. Consultation and Involvement**

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' evening, parent-school forum meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of governors**

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- 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 governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

## **The role of the headteacher (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)**

- It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

## **The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching**

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

## **7. Tackling discrimination**

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to the phase leader, Acting Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body.

### **What is a discriminatory incident?**

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

### **Types of discriminatory incident**

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

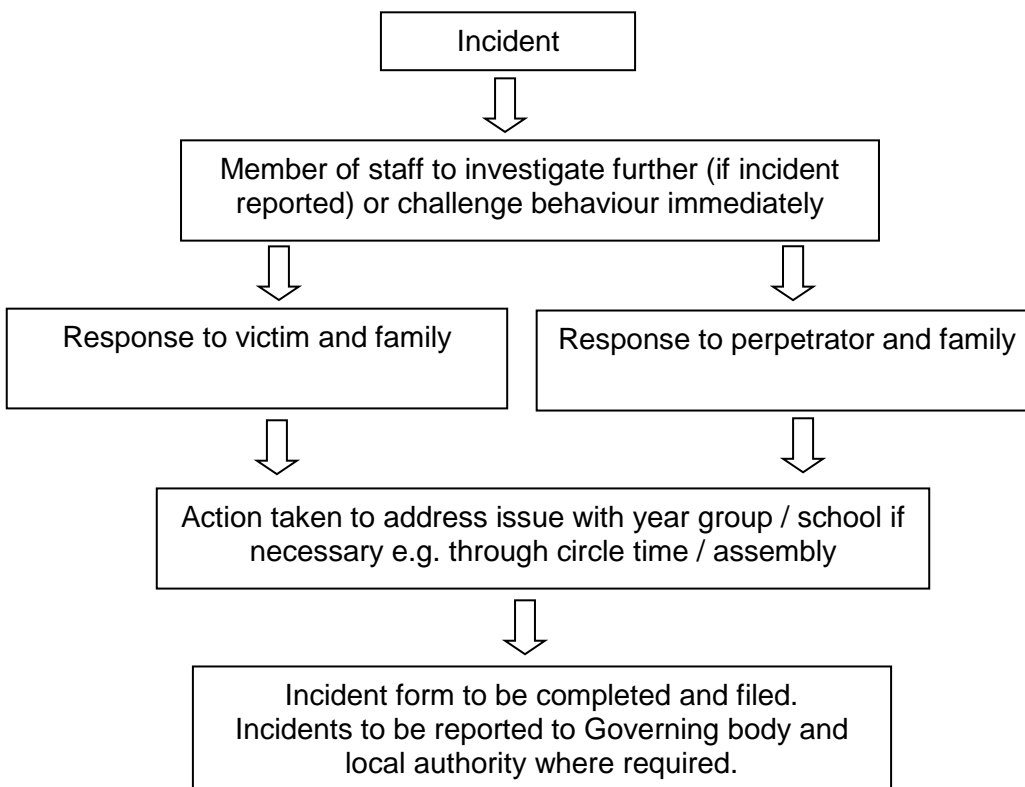
- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;

- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

### Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

Our procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:



## **8. Review of progress and impact**

The Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

## **9. Publishing the plan**

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, we will:

- Publish our plan on the school website;
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
- Make sure hard copies are available.

**Last Review Date:** February 2024

**Next Review Date:** February 2027

## 10. Action Plan

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	Who is responsible for implementing?	What are the timeframes?	Early success indicators
All	<b>MUST BE INCLUDED</b>  Publish and promote the Equality Policy through the school website and staff meetings.	Share information about the Equality & Accessibility Policy in annual survey	Headteacher / designated member of staff	Annually	Staff are familiar with the principles of the Equality Plan and use them when planning lessons, creating class room displays  Parents are aware of the Equality Plan
All	Monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils.	Achievement data analysed by race, gender and disability	Headteacher / Governing body	Annually in Sept	Analysis of teacher assessments / annual data demonstrates the gap is narrowing for equality groups
All	Ensure that the curriculum promotes role models and heroes that young people positively identify with, which reflects the school's diversity in terms of race, gender and disability.	Increase in pupils' participation, confidence and achievement levels	Humanities lead, through history lesson plans	Annually – review in July each year	Notable increase in participation and confidence of targeted groups
All	Recognise and represent the talents of disabled pupils in more abled programmes, and ensure representation on the programmes fully reflects the school population in terms of race and gender.	Most able pupils monitored by race, gender and disability	Member of staff leading on most able	Half termly reviews throughout the year.	Analysis more able register indicates it is changing to reflect the school's diversity
All	Ensure that displays in classrooms and corridors promote diversity in terms of race, gender and ethnicity.	Increase in pupil participation, confidence and positive identity – monitor through PSHE	Headteacher	Ongoing	More diversity reflected in school displays across all year groups
All	Ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School Council by election or co-option), class assemblies, fund raising etc.	School council representation monitored by race, gender, disability	Member of staff leading on school council	Ongoing and review in July each year.	More diversity in school council membership

<b>Equality Strand</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>How will the impact of the action be monitored?</b>	<b>Who is responsible for implementing?</b>	<b>What are the timeframes?</b>	<b>Early success indicators</b>
Race Equality Duty	Identify, respond and report racist incidents as outlined in the Plan. Report the figures to the Governing body on a termly basis.	The Headteacher / Governing body will use the data to assess the impact of the school's response to incidents i.e. have whole school / year group approaches led to a decrease in incidents, can repeat perpetrators be identified, are pupils and parents satisfied with the response?	Headteacher / Governing body	Reported for Governing Body termly and annually.	Teaching staff are aware of and respond to racist incidents  Consistent nil reporting is challenged by the Governing Body
Gender Equality Duty	Introduce initiative to encourage girls to take up sport outside the curriculum requirements, ie cheerleading, netball and girls' football, to make participation rates more reflective of the school population.	Increased participation of girls in sports clubs and out of school sport activities	Member of staff leading on sports / PE	Annually reported to governing body	More girls take up after-school sports clubs  Annual tournaments. Boys and Girls teams
Disability Equality Duty	Promote Governor vacancies with leaflets in accessible formats, by involving disabled young people / parents in design and specifically welcoming applications from disabled candidates.	Monitoring of applications by disability to see if material was effective	Lead Governor on Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	Annually	More applications from disabled candidates to be School Governors
Example: Community cohesion	Celebrate cultural events throughout the year to increase pupil awareness and understanding of different communities e.g. Diwali, Eid, Christmas.	PSHE assessments	Member of staff leading on PSHE	Ongoing	Increased awareness of different communities shown in PSHE assessments and pupil interviews.

## **Appendix A**

### **Examples of further actions you may want to include in your action plan to meet the general duties**

#### **ENSURING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND PARTICIPATION**

##### **The school will ensure that:**

- Pupil achievement is monitored by race, gender and disability and any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow the gap are addressed;
- All staff are aware of the school's Equality Plan;
- The talents of disabled pupils are recognised and represented in Gifted and Talented programmes, and representation on the programmes fully reflects the school population in terms of race and gender;
- There is an inclusive approach to ensuring all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School Council by election or co-option); class assemblies; fund raising etc;
- Disabled children can take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including educational visits and journeys; lunchtime activities; PE and dance and assemblies;
- Extended school activities such as breakfast and after-school clubs take into account pupil needs and access issues and pupils attending reflect the diversity of the school population in terms of race, gender, disability and socio-economic status;
- Staff, pupils, parents and carers will continue to be involved in the future development of the Equality Plan through input and feedback from surveys, staff meetings, school council meetings, parents evenings etc.

##### **The school will provide:**

- Extra and additional support for pupils who are under-achieving, in order to make progress in their learning and their personal well being, e.g. ensuring that children with visual impairment have accessible texts; that children with hearing impairment have an enhanced acoustic classroom environment;
- Additional support for parents of under-achieving children (e.g. reporting progress; discussing needs);
- Additional support for disabled parents/carers and staff to help them to play a full part in the life of the school (e.g. providing a sign interpreter for a deaf parent; ensuring that meetings are held in the most accessible parts of the school to support wheelchair users).

## **PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND MEETING NEEDS**

### **The school will:**

- Promote positive images which reflect the diversity of the school and community in terms of race, gender and disability, for example in assemblies, books, publications and learning materials and in classroom/corridor display.
- Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the school and support them in their work and career development, and try to reflect the diversity of the school community in its workforce;
- Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the governing body and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that they can fully participate and contribute;
- Provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relationships, including links with different schools and communities;
- Provide extended services, with opportunities for pupils, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups;
- Supporting disabled pupils in the period of transition between primary and secondary school to ease the stress of moving and increase familiarity with new surroundings;
- Helping children and young people to understand others and value diversity;
- Promoting shared values, awareness of human rights and how to apply and defend them;
- Developing skills of participation and responsible action – for example through the new 'Identity and Diversity: living together in the UK' strand of citizenship education.

## **ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

### **The school will:**

- Develop and adapt its procedures on anti-bullying to include equality perspectives;
- Support staff to challenge and address any bullying and harassment that is based on a person's race, gender or ethnicity;
- Keep a record and report how these incidents are dealt with to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis;

- Review its approach to race, gender and disability bullying and harassment whenever it reviews its policy on behaviour.

## **MONITORING IMPACT**

- The school will collect and analyse evidence and data on children's achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability, and use this to inform strategies to raise achievement;
- The governing body will report annually in the School Profile/and or annual report to parents on the effectiveness and success of its Equality Plan. We will place the report alongside the plan on our website.

## CHECK LIST FOR SCHOOL STAFF AND GOVERNORS

- Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training? Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides?
- How has your Equality Plan been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents and pupils?
- Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?
- Are all pupils encouraged to participate in school life? Are pupils who make a positive contribution reflective of the school's diversity e.g. through class assemblies / school council?
- Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other pupils? Are racist incidents reported to the governing body on a termly basis?
- Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of your school community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?
- Does the school take part in annual events such as Black History Month to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the school, and are issues such as language barriers considered?
- Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?
- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?