



## **BIRCHWOOD POLICY STANDARD**

### **EQUALITIES INFORMATION & OBJECTIVES**

**This policy addresses Race, Gender and Disability.**

**Incorporating Action Plans for all three aspects of equality. This Scheme and the accompanying Action Plans sets out how the Birchwood Management Committee will meet the three equality requirements.**

#### **Overall aims of our scheme**

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

#### **Gender (sex)**

Duties under the Equality Act 2010 require the management committee to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex.
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men.

From 6 April 2010, the Equality Act 2010 requires the management committee to promote equality of opportunity between women and men (including boys and girls) and to publish a Gender Equality Scheme showing how the PRU intends to fulfill the general and specific duties. The management committee will revise and review the plan every 3 years and report on progress annually.

*There are no specific duties or requirements on schools or PRU's in relation to gender reassignment, beyond the requirement not to discriminate in terms of employment of staff*

## **Disability**

Duties under Part 5A of the DDA 2005 require the management committee to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the PRU or may wish to; and
- prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how they will meet these duties.

**Parts 2, 3 and 4 of the DDA 2005 apply to different aspects of the PRU's operation: to employment, to the provision of services and to education. The Disability Equality Duty brings together responsibilities under Parts 2, 3 and 4 and the PRU's scheme shows how the school is meeting its general duty to promote disability equality across all its areas of responsibility.**

**Duties in Part 4 of the DDA 1995 require the management committee to plan (The PRU's Accessibility Plan) to increase access to education for disabled pupils in 3 ways:**

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the environment of the PRU to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information, provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

## **Race**

Duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 require the management committee to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups

To meet this requirement the Management Committee:

- has produced and incorporated the race equality policy into the Single Equality Scheme identifying action to be taken to tackle discrimination and promote equality and good race relations across PRU activity.
- is assessing and monitoring the impact of race equality policies on students, staff, and parents, in particular the attainment levels of pupils from different racial groups, and take such steps as are reasonably practical to publish the results of this monitoring annually
- is recording racist incidents and reports them to the local authority.

## **Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation**

Duties under the Equality Action 2006 require the management committee to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of religion or belief.

There are no specific duties or requirements on schools to publish a Scheme relating to religion, beliefs or sexual orientation.

## **1. Purpose of the Equality Scheme**

**1.1 The purpose of Birchwood's Equality Information & Objectives is to meet the duties to promote equality of opportunity for and between diverse members of the school community, including, disabled students, staff, parents, women, men and different racial groups within the PRU. In order to do this the PRU will**

- Establish with all staff an overall vision of the duty to promote equality of opportunity for students, staff and parents.
  
- Elements of the duties are:
  - (i) Promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people, women and men and between different racial groups.
  
  - (ii) Eliminate discrimination and harassment on the grounds of disability, sex, race or ethnicity.
  
  - (iii) Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
  
  - (iv) Encourage participation of disabled students, parents, staff and carers.
  
  - (v) Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

At Birchwood the duties are likely to be linked to some or all of the following, dependent upon current priorities:

- the participation and involvement of our students, staff and parents
- preparation for entry to the PRU
- policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- extended activities
- the PRU's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education or work
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of students
- homework
- access to PRU facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum
- sports
- employees' and staff welfare

## **1.2 Action by PRU manager and commissioning and commissioned and non commissioned managers responsible for Equality:**

- Raise awareness of 5 elements of the duties with all staff, governors, parents and students – referring to 'Implementing the DDA in Schools' published by the Disability Rights Commission
- Ensure understanding of the broad definition of Disability within the DDA.
- Encourage disclosure of disability by students, parents, staff and other users of the PRU.
- Refer to 'The Gender Equality Duty and Schools' published by the Equal Opportunities Commission
- Work with trade unions to implement the gender duty in employment functions
- Create separate action plans for each equality duty highlighting links as appropriate.
- Set up Equality Working Party - membership to include:
  - PRU manager
  - member of the management committee
  - representative of the commissioned and/or non commissioned managers
  - parent with interest or experience of disability issues
  - staff representative with an interest in disability or experience of disability issues.
  - associate members e.g. students with disability, community/voluntary groups, trade unions

## **1.3 The Key Functions of the Birchwood Equality Working Party will be:**

- To ensure the involvement of disabled students, parents/carers and staff
- To ensure the involvement of trade unions regarding the gender equality duty
- To arrange for the gathering of information.
- To consider arrangements for race, disability and gender impact assessments

## **1.4 Birchwood Management Committee will use the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 definition of disability to respond to the different needs of disabled people.**

### **Definition of disability**

The DDA defines a disabled person as someone who has:

'A physical or mental impairment which has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect** on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

### **Definition of the terms:**

- 'physical impairment' includes sensory impairments;
- 'mental impairment' includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness;
- 'substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'; and
- 'long-term' is defined as 12 months or more.

**The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above.**

### **The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:**

- mobility;
- manual dexterity;
- physical co-ordination;
- continence;
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;
- speech, hearing or eyesight;
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand;
- perception of risk of physical danger.

**By definition, many students attending Birchwood may be considered to have a disability in that hidden impairments may be seriously impeding their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand).**

Some people are automatically covered by the definition: those with cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection or a severe disfigurement. There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

## **1.5 Involvement of students, staff, parents and other users of the PRU**

Birchwood will consider and plan to involve students, staff, parents and other users of the PRU in relation to the race, disability and gender equality duty.

We will continue to take into account the preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting.

Birchwood will ensure the involvement of a range of people and hear a range of views to meet the disability, gender and race duties.

The views of the students, staff, parents, stakeholders and other users of the PRU will be used to set priorities.

## **1.6 Information gathering**

The collection of information is crucial to supporting Birchwood in making decisions about what actions would best improve opportunities and outcomes for students, staff and parents in respect of Gender, race and Disability. The information will also subsequently help us to review our performance.

Information will be gathered on entry using Birchwood Admission forms and will be updated when necessary.

Information will be detailed enough to enable us to measure the delivery on equality duties relating to disability, race and gender, to assess the impact of the changes made and to help the PRU identify which of the priorities have been achieved.

Whilst acknowledging the importance of gathering information, in line with Kent guidance we do not ask for information in respect of gender, sexual preference, religious beliefs or expression, ethnicity or age on application forms or during recruitment. However information with regard to disability is requested in order that we can ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made enabling our disabled staff and volunteers to perform their given role.

### **1.7 Information to be gathered**

- Recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees, women and men from different racial backgrounds.
- Education opportunities available to and achievement of disabled, female and male students and students from different racial backgrounds.
- Identify disabled students, parents, carers, staff and other users of the PRU to develop the Scheme (All efforts to be made to collect information)
- The working party will recommend about how the information is to be held in the PRU, and how it interlinks with other registers. Confidentiality and 'need to know' clauses are required.
- Student attainment of boys and girls (taking into account that certain groups of boys may do as well as girls) and all vulnerable groups.
- Careers and sports choices by vulnerable groups including race and gender
- Incidents of bullying and harassment on the grounds of gender, disability and race. These will be entered into the bullying log/behaviour log in each project

### **1.8 Impact assessments**

Impact assessments refers to the review of all current and proposed policies and practices in order to help schools act to ensure no gender, racial group or disabled person is disadvantaged by school activities and to promote race, disability and gender equality. Impact assessments will be an on-going process to ensure that our policies and practices develop, evolve and are incorporated into the PRU's planned review and revision of every policy. Every new policy or procedure will be drawn up with regard to our duties to promote race, disability and gender equality and to eliminate discrimination and harassment within the school community.

**We will use the KCC Equality Impact assessment tool for schools as a basis for impact assessments**

## **2 Identifying the main priorities for Birchwood's Scheme and deciding our actions**

### **2.1 The priorities for the Equality Scheme will be set in the light of:**

- an examination of the information that the PRU has gathered; and
- the messages that the PRU has heard from the disabled students, staff, parents and others that have been involved in the development of the scheme.

## **2.2 Some of the priorities identified may include:**

- Improving access to information;
- Improving the involvement of disabled students, staff and parents
- Challenging gender stereotypes in subject choices and career advice
- Health and sport differences between girls and boys.
- Tackling sexual and sexist bullying of boys and girls
- Access to appropriate careers advice, training and careers choices of boys and girls
- Employment and considering objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap

## **3 Making it happen**

### **3.1 Implementation**

The Scheme will be supported by individual action plans relating to disability, gender and race equality and be incorporated into our School Improvement Plan, with oversight by the management committee so that progress can be checked.

The Action plans will show:

- clear steps of how, when and where;
- an indication of expected outcomes or performance criteria;
- clear timescales;
- a specified date and process for review.

The Scheme will incorporate the reviewed Accessibility Plans into the disability equality action plan.

The PRU will evaluate the effectiveness of the Scheme with its School Improvement Partner and Ofsted when the school is inspected

### **3.2 Publication**

The working party will decide how best to publish the Equality Scheme either as a separate document or as part of the School Improvement Plan. The PRU manager will provide a copy for anyone asking for it in a range of formats.

### **3.3 Reporting**

The Manager of the Birchwood PRU will report annually on the progress made on the action plans and its effect on policy and practice within the PRU.

### 3.4 Reviewing and revising the scheme

As part of the review of the Scheme, Birchwood will:

- revisit the information that was used to identify the priorities for the scheme; and
- re-examine the information to see if actions that the PRU has taken have affected opportunities and outcomes for gender, disabled students, staff and parents and diverse racial groups.

The review of the Scheme will inform its revision; how we set new priorities and new action plans for the next scheme. This process will continue to:

- involve students, staff and parents; and
- be based on information that the PRU has gathered.

The main documents that will inform the development of this scheme are:

- Disability Equality in Education Course Book, Richard Rieser
- Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in schools and early years settings, DCFS
- Promoting Disability Equality in Schools, DCFS Guidance.
- The Gender Equality Duty and Schools, EOC guidance

### 3.5 Action Plans

DES Action Plan including reviewed accessibility plan to be added.

GES Action Plan to be added

Action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between different racial groups to be added.

## KEY LEGISLATION

Equality strand	Legislation
Age	Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
Disability	Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Disability Discrimination Act 2005
Gender (sex)	Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended Equality Act 2006



Gender (reassignment)	Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
Race	Race Relations Act 1976, as amended Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
Religion or belief	Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006
Sexual orientation	Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, as amended

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