



EQUALITY POLICY

Policy Owner	Bridge Short Stay School
Last Reviewed	November 2020
Approved by Management Committee	January 2021
Next Review Date	September 2021

Bridge Short Stay School Equality Policy

Statement of Intent

1. The Directorate of Education and Lifelong Learning recognises that disadvantage, discrimination, and prejudice exist in society and people often face simultaneous oppression. The Directorate is committed to do all in its power to eliminate these inequalities by endeavouring to be fair, reasonable and just in all its responsibilities and working towards the creation of accessible educational and leisure opportunities and systems that are equitable.
2. The Directorate recognises and values the diversity of the Borough's communities and its workforce. It will endeavour to ensure its service delivery and employment practices take full account of their needs and are of the highest possible standards of equality. The Directorate will build upon the strengths of the community and, in partnership with other organisations, will work to eliminate racism, promote equality of opportunity and develop good relations with and between people from different racial groups.
3. The Directorate accepts the definition of institutional racism set out in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report and will seek to address institutional racism and all other forms of discrimination. The Directorate accepts the definition of a racist incident set out in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report and will deal with such incidents with due seriousness.

The Directorate will:-

4. Support all aspects of Staffordshire County Council Community Plan, Council Plan, Best Value Performance Plan, and Equality and Diversity Policy (which replaces the Equal Opportunities Policy) through work within the Directorate and in partnership with other council departments, schools, the community, the voluntary sector, the private sector, and external agencies, to implement the policy;
5. Ensure that race equality objectives are mainstreamed in all relevant strategies, policies, plans and reviews;
6. Wherever possible, ensure that contractual arrangements with private sector service providers take account of the general duty and pass on responsibility for complying with the specific duties to such provider agencies, by way of contractual requirements;
7. Take a leading role in relation to the collection of racist incidents data;

8. Review and refine procedures for monitoring racist incidents and racially motivated bullying and harassment throughout the Directorate;
9. Provide the training and support necessary to enable racial harassment and violence to be dealt with consistently and effectively;
10. Continue to refine ethnic monitoring and detailed analysis of staff employed throughout the Directorate, to develop further strategies to ensure the composition of the workforce reflects, at all levels, the background levels of economically active minority ethnic groups in the local population;
11. Develop positive action initiatives to aid the professional development and employment prospects of under-represented groups;
12. Offer racial equality training to enhance the knowledge and awareness of all personnel within the Directorate and encourage them to challenge racial prejudice and racist attitudes;
13. Monitor the uptake of training related to race equality taken up by Directorate staff and school governors;
14. Encourage and facilitate efforts within the minority ethnic workforce to form support groups and consult with them over policy changes;
15. Promote and deliver race equality in line with the proposals outlined in the generic Equality Standard for Local Government;
16. Reflect the diversity of the local community in any publicity, public relations or marketing campaigns;
17. Respond promptly and fairly to any complaints about Council services, including those of discrimination;
18. Indicate its arrangements for publishing this policy and communicating the results of its assessment and monitoring activity under the policy;
19. Make full use of all forms of monitoring data to inform future planning and service design;
20. Review and monitor annually this policy to assess its impact on minority ethnic groups and amend it in respect of any significant changes in relevant national policies and practice;

21. Adopt and commend to schools the Library Poster Policy which ensures racist or racially insensitive materials are not displayed in the borough's libraries.

Schools and Services to Schools

The Directorate will:-

22. Take a leadership and monitoring role to assist Committee Management members and Headteachers to discharge those responsibilities delegated to schools that fall within the Race Equality context including the development of policies and procedures in line with the requirements of The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; the recommendations of The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, The Commission for Racial Equality 'Learning for All' standards, and other relevant legislation;
23. Assume an advisory and supporting role for staff implementing the Council's policies and procedures with regard to Race Equality through the contexts of its Equality and Diversity Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Race Equality Policy, Race Equality Scheme and any other relevant Council documents;
24. Monitor the achievement of children and young people by ethnicity and refine procedures for addressing underachievement;
25. Support schools and services to ensure the curriculum celebrates the United Kingdom as an ethnically diverse society;
26. Monitor for ethnicity permanent and fixed term exclusions, review and reinforce strategies to address over represented groups in both categories;
27. Support schools, libraries, youth centres, and other Directorate establishments in the development of initiatives to encourage, enable and empower young people from minority ethnic communities;
28. Support the development of initiatives to ensure minority ethnic young people are able to participate fully in the consultation process that precedes changes to policies that affect, or could affect them;
29. Encourage minority ethnic young people to form interest/support groups of their own and consult with them over extant procedures and policy development initiatives;
30. Further refine procedures for the reporting of racist incidents and clarify the form of the data required and the uses that will be made of it;

31. Encourage schools, libraries, youth centres and other Directorate establishments to display images that promote diversity and the inclusion of under represented groups in their publicity materials and websites;
32. Support schools to ensure that staff, and governors who are involved in staff selection and appointment receive regular racial equality training to ensure the avoidance of unlawful discrimination.

Community Education and Development Division

The Directorate will:-

33. Celebrate cultural diversity, support community cohesion and help to empower under represented minority ethnic groups and individuals by endeavouring to involve them in all community development initiatives;
34. Consult with and, wherever possible, beyond community leaders by listening to ordinary people's views;
35. Assist minority ethnic community groups and individuals to develop their knowledge of the Directorate's policies and procedures and their consequent ability to influence the Directorate through the consultative processes;
36. Engage with minority ethnic communities on all relevant issues and regularly review arrangements for consultation to ensure that the different needs and requirements of people are properly represented in Directorate decision making processes, especially in relation to policies development and review;
37. Extend the range of consultation techniques with organisations, groups, individuals and particular sections of the minority ethnic community, including direct consultation, conferences, workshops and questionnaires;
38. Utilise relevant translation and interpretation services as and when the need arises to allow full participation of the whole community;
39. Widen the use of market surveys to find out people's views about the Directorate and the services it offers identifying, in particular, the opinions and needs of disadvantaged individuals and groups in the community;
40. Monitor by ethnicity the uptake and responses to the surveys;

41. Encourage and support minority ethnic groups and businesses to deliver services and seek to encourage them to be involved in the Directorate's work;
42. Wherever possible, ensure race equality outcomes are explicit in community development initiatives;
43. Encourage minority ethnic young people to form interest/support groups of their own and consult with them over extant procedures and policy development initiatives;
44. Ensure that minority ethnic groups and community based initiatives are adequately resourced;
45. Ensure the necessary resources are committed to capacity building in minority ethnic voluntary sector community groups, organisations and businesses;
46. Ensure that minority ethnic groups are involved in, and benefit from, community based, regional and national schemes such as Education Action Zones, Priority Neighbourhood Initiatives, New Deal for Communities, the Commitment to Regeneration, Better Government for Older People Projects and Sure Start initiatives.

Employment

The Directorate will:-

47. Follow procedures outlined in the Bridge Centre's Equality and Diversity Policy and adhere to the practice outlined in the 'Fair Deal for Job Applicants' document;
48. Ensure that access is gained to the widest possible labour market and the best employees are secured for all positions;
49. Review and extend strategies to help the Directorate achieve a workforce that reflects the diversity of the local economically active community;
50. Ensure due regard is given to employees' religious and cultural needs;
51. Ensure, wherever possible, simultaneous advertising of vacancies externally and internally;
52. Take steps to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches potential employees from minority ethnic groups;

53. Ensure vacancies are advertised as widely as possible within the local community including, job centres, careers offices, colleges, community centres and universities, as well as within minority ethnic press/media and other relevant organisations;
54. Implement measures to help increase the involvement of minority ethnic individuals in the short listing and interviewing processes of mainstream appointments;
55. Ensure people from under represented groups are encouraged to apply for training and employment opportunities and that managers encourage and support minority ethnic staff in their workplace to gain management qualifications;
56. Wherever possible, provide targeted training for people from under represented groups to prepare them to compete on genuinely equal terms for jobs and promotion. However, actual recruitment to all jobs will be strictly on merit;
57. Where appropriate, make use of lawful exemptions to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular minority groups;
58. Ensure all vacancy advertisements include an appropriate short statement promoting diversity and reinforcing the Directorate's commitment to equality of opportunity;
59. Insist selection criteria (job description and employee specification) are kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job;
60. Monitor and publish, by ethnicity, the number of staff employed in all Directorate establishments;
61. Monitor and publish, by ethnicity, applications for employment, training and promotion;
62. Monitor and publish, by ethnicity, the number of staff who receive training, the type of training they receive, and the qualifications gained;
63. Monitor and publish by ethnicity the number of staff who benefit from, or suffer detriment as a result of, performance management procedures;
64. Monitor and publish, by ethnicity, the number of staff involved in grievance procedures;
65. Monitor and publish, by ethnicity, the number of staff who are subject to disciplinary procedures.

Library Services

The Directorate will:-

66. Develop initiatives to ensure library services provide good value to the Borough's minority ethnic communities;
67. Ensure service developments have a clear positive impact on the use of library services by minority ethnic communities;
68. Ensure public library service managers take responsibility for improving access to their services for people from minority ethnic communities;
69. Work towards removing the barriers to change among users, non-users and service providers;
70. Develop the use of Best Value Performance Plans and appropriate local performance indicators to position services to minority ethnic communities in the mainstream of library modernisation initiatives;
71. Further develop services in ways sensitive to the range of needs related to leisure time, cultural development and education and vocational studies, with particular regard for under represented groups;
72. Develop more effective ways of consulting with the minority ethnic community with regard, in particular, to those who use library services least;
73. Work towards ensuring that access to library facilities are 'Open to All' in line with the Department of Culture Media and Sport guidelines;
74. Reinforce, through the Stock Acquisition Policy, the purchase of materials that promote racial equality; help develop good relations between ethnically diverse communities and build community cohesion;
75. Implement the Directorate Racist Incident Monitoring procedure and ensure adequate staff training in race equality to enable staff to tackle racism firmly, effectively and with sensitively;
76. Participate fully in local and national events promoting cultural diversity;

77. Develop a regular staff-training programme on equality and diversity issues to support race equality legislation and update them on current good practice;
78. Monitor and report, on the ethnicity of library service users completing the Public Library User Surveys in libraries;
79. Set performance targets as a means of increasing the use of key library services by members of minority ethnic communities, and as a reflection of the Directorate's ambition to ensure that library services become more relevant and accessible to these communities;
80. Work in partnership with other agencies to support policies and developments relating to race equality;
81. Produce promotional library resources in community languages to encourage a wider take up of services from under represented groups;
82. Investigate local and national initiatives to increase recruitment of front line staff from minority ethnic communities and implement measures found to be effective.

Rights Under the Policy

83. The policy assigns rights alongside responsibilities;
84. Any customer who feels that they have been unfairly treated is entitled to submit a complaint to the Council, which will be dealt with through the Council's corporate complaints procedure;
85. Any employee who feels that they may have a complaint under this policy should raise the matter through the Council's Grievance Procedure;
86. Job applicants who feel that they may have grounds for complaint should write to the Head of Personnel and Support Services, Chief Executive's Department;
87. The Council will seek to protect individuals from any form of victimisation arising from their taking action in relation to their rights in law or making any complaint through the Council's procedures arising from this policy.

Responsibilities of all Departments, Schools, Sections and Services

88. All staff will be responsible for implementing the Race Equality Policy. Future departmental policy developments and reviews will need to reflect the principles and content of this policy. The co-operation of all employees is essential for the success of this policy. However, the ultimate responsibility for achieving the policy's objectives, and for ensuring compliance with the relevant Acts of Parliament as well as the various Codes of Practice, lies with the Council. Behaviour or actions against the spirit and/or the letter of the laws on which this is based will be considered serious disciplinary matters, and may, in some cases, lead to dismissal.