

Equality Objectives report for 2014/15

Our policies and practice have long been implicit for equality in The Downley School ethos and atmosphere (demonstrated by our low absence rates, extremely low bullying and exclusion rates, excellent behaviour standards and happy feel in the school).

However, on an annual basis, we also have to publish evidence of the steps being taken and progress made towards meeting the Equality Objectives which we have set and which contribute to pupil welfare and the school community. These are currently:

1. To ensure that there is support for parents with English as Additional Language (EAL) in reception and links on the website to useful agencies.
2. To monitor equality of representation and participation at school events, activities and posts of responsibility.

With regard to the first objective the pupil information sheets completed when a child starts the school have been amended to invite parents to make the school aware of any special access requirements e.g in terms of disability or English as Additional Language. Very few requirements have been made known to the school but arrangements are made accordingly to ensure that the site and activities are fully accessible to all and that the format of information is presented or clarified where language may be an issue.

On the school website there are numerous links to agencies and resources which support parents of pupils with Special Educational Needs. As yet there are no links for parents with EAL as no specific need has been identified, although these will be investigated further.

Towards meeting our second objective we monitor equality of representation at school events and activities on an ongoing basis. The school community is ethnically diverse and it is noticeable that events such as the Christmas Fayre and the Summer Fayre, school plays, and parents in school days are well supported by parents, carers and grandparents from a broad range of cultures. For activities such as parent's information evenings it is normal for only one of the parents to attend but again representation is broad ranged.

We also undertook this year an audit of our pupils to look at representation across school life and after school activities and this will be regularly revisited. We looked at how all pupils took on class responsibilities (eg. monitors, school council and values council representatives, prefects, sports teams, music or arts group participation, clubs etc) and can report that there is excellent representation of all groups across all activities. We noted that one ethnic group was underrepresented at club activities and wrote to the parents to ensure they felt equally aware of opportunities and welcome to participate.

The staffing of our school demonstrates a good balance between male and female role models, age and experience and representation from different ethnicities. All staff vacancies are widely promoted, and good equality practice is followed when selecting the best candidates for roles.

In summary we are confident that our whole school ethos and approach to learning and sharing values demonstrates equality of opportunity and participation for everyone involved in our school community. We are, however, committed to consistently reviewing and improving our practice to ensure we develop our understanding of diversity of needs and would welcome hearing from anybody with suggestions or comments regarding this.

Please contact governors@downley.sch.bucks.uk if you would like to comment.