

Look around this room.....

What is different?

What is the same?

Hair colour, eye colour, what we like, where we live, our personalities, our skin colour – these can make us all different.

But, we are all the same too...we all have needs, we all have feelings, we all have thoughts, we all have likes and, we are all human.

Undoubtedly, what is special about being human**is** our humanity.

Equality and diversity is a term used in the United Kingdom to define and champion equality, diversity and human rights.

We are all impacted by inequality in a multitude of ways. Yet, this is nothing new. Inequality in gender is a fight that dates back hundreds of years. It is thanks to women, such as the Suffragettes, who were willing to go to prison and even die for their cause and who fought tirelessly that women were granted the same right as men to vote in the year 1918 under the Representation Act.

For many years, the inequality of the treatment of black people has been documented. It is thanks to activists such as Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks who campaigned endlessly for their rights that racism is no longer tolerated. The 1968 Race Relations Act was passed to change and develop the lives of black and minority groups for the better.

Almost twenty years later, the fight for equality for people with disabilities was won as the Disability Act was passed. This act made it unlawful to discriminate against people in respect of their disabilities.

In 2010, new legislation – the Equality Act, was passed to help ensure an individual, or groups in society, are not discriminated against. This act allows public bodies to take positive action to help groups of people overcome disadvantages in society.

However, despite the 2010 act, we are still encountering examples of inequality today.

At school, we see people from all kinds of background and ethnicities. It is imperative that we treat them all the same, it is our job to ensure that everyone feels included and that everyone feels there are equal opportunities for all to access.

We must culture an environment where we can thrive together, where individual characteristics are celebrated for making people unique, and being different is not perceived in a negative way.

We must be willing to challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes and enforce an all-inclusive culture. It is about us being challenged to recognise and value all sorts of differences in order to make our world a better place for everyone.

Diversity is an acronym for

D is for Different

I is for Individuals

V is for Valuing

E is for Each other

R and S stand for Regardless of Skin

I is for Intellect

T is for Talents

And Y is for Years

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On Saturday, 25th August, I took part in a diverse festival – Manchester Pride. We should celebrate and commend festivals such as Manchester Pride- an award winning flagship event that is a lively and colourful celebration held to raise awareness of equality and diversity. It promotes equality of opportunity for all and supports the belief that everyone should be treated equally. People of all nationalities and diverse groups in society come together in Manchester and wear the symbol of Manchester Pride- the rainbow. This represents the coming together of many diverse groups in society just as the rainbow is the coming together of many different colours.

It is the belief that everybody should be treated equally and with dignity, no matter what their circumstances.

As humans, we can think and articulate our thoughts. We also have a sense of right and wrong, which means we have a conscience. No person should be discriminated against for their beliefs, gender, age, colour, disabilities or sexual orientations.

To conclude, we are born *free* so all people have an equal right to freedom. But, we must remember that freedom does not mean we can do *anything*, nor can freedom for some, mean limiting the freedom of others.

We must live together in a society full of mutual respect regardless of differences.

As people, we can be compared to these two eggs, they look completely different, unique in their own way. However, if I was to break them open, you would clearly see that they are identical.

I, and my team, truly believe we can live together as equals yet still be diverse.