

EQUALITY and EQUITY POLICY

(Public sector equality duty)

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Last reviewed	December 2022
Review frequency	Equality Policy & objectives - 3 Years Equality Information - annually
Next review date	December 2025
<i>Annual Equality Review</i>	<i>14/12/2023</i>
<i>Approved by</i>	<i>Board of Trustees 14/12/2023</i>
<i>Next review date</i>	<i>13/12/2024</i>

Our core purpose is to secure equity.

We are committed to ensuring equity and equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from our school, irrespective of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to our school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

We are proud of our record of promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of our pupils. This policy contributes to our Personal Development and SMSC work by:

- promoting tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
- encouraging respect for other people.

This Equality Policy contributes to our aim of increasing the understanding and knowledge expected of pupils as a result of our promotion of fundamental British values. In particular, we aim to provide:

- an appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety
- an understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law
- an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination. The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, 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 promotes respectful relationships for all.

Equality and the law

- We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations among all members of the school community and particularly with regard to protected characteristics.
- We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
- We recognise that these duties are essential for achieving the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework and that they reflect international human rights as expressed in the UN convention on the rights of the child, the UN convention on the rights of people with disabilities and the Human Rights Act 1998.
- We recognise that the nine protected characteristics under law are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation

We see all people as of equal value, whether or not they have a protected characteristic/s.

Definition of disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities’. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities regardless of their effect. The disability provisions in the Equality Act are different from those of other protected characteristics. Rather than just treating a person with a disability equally with those who don’t, there are times when they should be treated more favourably in order for them to be able to benefit from what we offer to the same extent as a person without a disability. We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that members of our community with a disability are fully included in our school.

Definitions of discrimination (adapted from the Equalities Act 2010)

Unlawful discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances, because of a special characteristic such as age, disability, gender or race. Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all but has a different impact on members of one or more protected groups of which the complainant is one and is placed at a disadvantage as a result. Victimisation is unlawful which is treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination e.g. by bringing a complaint or giving evidence. Harassment is also unlawful and is when there is unwanted conduct which violates a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating and hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them on the grounds of one of the relevant characteristics.

Aims

The key aims of this policy are to:

- a) Secure equity for all children
- b) Ensure that students and staff treat each other with complete respect and dignity at all times.
- c) Prepare students for life in a diverse society where they exercise respect and understanding for everyone.
- d) Explain the protection afforded to staff under the Equality Act 2010.

Additionally, this policy aims to meet our obligations to publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and to publish equality objectives.

We make the following commitments:

- We will work towards eliminating discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- We will advance equity for people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- We will foster good relations across all characteristics, and between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Responsibilities

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 and will be escalated using the school’s standard operating procedures where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Headteacher and logged in SIMS and MyConcern where appropriate. MyConcern data is reported to the Local Committee and to the Trustees termly. Incidents between staff will be dealt with in accordance with our Dignity at Work policy.

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. It may include use of technology such as mobile phones or email, instant messaging or social networking websites.

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'.

In addition to the specific actions set out in Appendix A we will:

General

- Ensure that we comply with all relevant legislation.
- Communicate our commitment to equity and diversity to all members of the school community.
- Inform all staff, students and Local Committee Volunteers of their responsibility in promoting and maintaining equality and equity.
- Monitor progress and achievement data by race, gender and disability.
- Curriculum
- The curriculum will display a discriminatory-free approach to teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Departments will present opportunities for promoting cultural diversity within subjects.

Environment

- All reasonable measures will be taken not to discriminate against staff or students with protected characteristics.
- Staff will be informed at the beginning and throughout the year of the individual needs of particular students.
- We will ensure through the Accessibility Plan that the school is a welcoming and accessible environment for all.

Extra-curricular activities

- The school will endeavour to provide a range of activities to apply the interests of all students.

Employment

- The school will comply with the law regarding equal opportunities and employment
- We will not ask health-related questions of applicants before a job offer, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work.
- New staff will be made aware of the policy and will be welcome to contribute to its development.
- Advertising will state that we are an equal opportunities employer and will appoint the best candidate for the job.

In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Objectives annually and review the entire policy 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.

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with PSED, we will:

- publish this policy and our equality objectives on the school website
- raise awareness of the objectives through the school news, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications
- make sure hard copies are available.

Appendix A

December 2022 – December 2025

Objective 1:

To narrow the attainment gap and improve outcomes for all students regardless of special educational need, disability, race, ethnicity, socio economic group, sexual orientation, religion, health or gender reassignment.

Objective 2:

To ensure that our curriculum is an explicit and deliberate guarantor of equity.

Why we have chosen these objectives:

- There were 4.1 million children living in poverty in the UK in 2017-18. That's 30 per cent of children, or nine in a class of 30. 1
- There are expected to be 5.2 million children living in poverty in the UK by 2022. 2
- 43% of children living in households with three or more children are in poverty
- 45% of children living in minority ethnic families are in poverty
- 47% of children in lone parent families are in poverty
- 70% of poor children are in working families
- 71% of children in families with no working adults are in poverty
- 47% of children living in lone-parent families are in poverty. 3
- Lone parents face a higher risk of poverty due to the lack of an additional earner, low rates of maintenance payments, gender inequality in employment and pay, and childcare costs.
- Children from Black and minority ethnic groups are more likely to be in poverty: 45 per cent are now in poverty, compared with 26 per cent of children in White British families. 4
- Work does not provide a guaranteed route out of poverty in the UK. 70 per cent of children growing up in poverty live in a household where at least one person works. 5
- Children in large families are at a far greater risk of living in poverty – 43 per cent of children living in families with 3 or more children live in poverty. 6
- Childcare and housing are two of the costs that take the biggest toll on families' budgets. When childcare costs are accounted for, an extra 130,000 children are pushed into poverty. 7

1. Households Below Average Income, Statistics on the number and percentage of people living in low income households for financial years 1994/95 to 2017/18, Tables 4a and 4b. Department for Work and Pensions, 2019.
2. Living standards, poverty and inequality in the UK: 2017–18 to 2021–22, The Institute for Fiscal Studies.
3. Households Below Average Income, Statistics on the number and percentage of people living in low income households for financial years 1994/95 to 2017/18, Table 4.5db. Department for Work and Pensions, 2019.
4. Households Below Average Income, Statistics on the number and percentage of people living in low income households for financial years 1994/95 to 2017/18, Table 4.16ts. Department for Work and Pensions, 2019.
5. Households Below Average Income, Statistics on the number and percentage of people living in low income households for financial years 1994/95 to 2017/18, Table 4.6ts. Department for Work and Pensions, 2019.
6. Households Below Average Income, Statistics on the number and percentage of people living in low income households for financial years 1994/95 to 2017/18, Table 4.5db. Department for Work and Pensions, 2019.
7. D Hirsch and L Valadez. How much does the official measure of child poverty under-estimate its extent by failing to take account of childcare costs? June 2015.

To achieve these objectives, we plan to:

- Provide an irresistible curriculum
- Ensure we teach the best of what has been thought and said in the world
- Have high expectations of subject knowledge from teachers and so provide high quality subject specific training
- Be clear about our curriculum intent; why this knowledge matters
- Be clear about how we sequence and assess the knowledge we want all students to learn
- Ensure that we promote ready, respectful and safe behaviour and attitudes at all times
- Ensure that all children can read
- Ensure that our Personal Development curriculum promotes ready, respectful and safe behaviour and attitudes
- Ensure our assembly and enrichment programmes are inclusive

Objective 3:

Demonstrate best practice in recruitment policy and actions, with regards to ensuring and encouraging equality, equity and diversity.

Why we have chosen this objective:

We believe diversity and equality of opportunity are central to our school ethos as it applies to both students and staff. These values not only ensure we meet our statutory duties but also help to go further in actively promoting and creating the workplace culture we want to maintain.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: -

- Ensure gender neutral language is used in all advertisements and job descriptions
- Make clear in advertisements that applicants will not be excluded on the grounds of sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, marital status, disability, age, religion, belief or sexual orientation
- Neutrally shortlist for roles with multiple applicants
- Accept and consider applications for job shares and requests for flexible working at the point of application
- Offer comprehensive and detailed feedback to both successful and unsuccessful applicants for all roles, on request
- Ensure that any images used in advertising or recruitment materials represent mixed sex and race

Progress against all objectives (to be recorded annually):

Objective 1	Curriculum review has taken place at all schools. Curriculum principles are explicit for each school. Specialist subject teaching provided by secondary to support primaries.
Objective 2	Improving writing has become a main priority across all schools (reading priority continues) with significant investment in staff training. The behaviour we expect to see is explicitly taught as part of our curriculum.
Objective 3	Continues to be a strength of the Trust.