



HEDGEWOOD SCHOOL

Equality & Diversity Policy

September 2021

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Hedgewood School recognises that certain groups in society have historically been disadvantaged because of unlawful discrimination they have faced due to their race, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age. This policy will put in place a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the school community and workforce.

Hedgewood School is actively committed to preventing discrimination, valuing diversity and promoting dignity of all pupils, families, staff, governors and visitors. We are committed to ensuring equal treatment of all, regardless of gender, race, nationality, ethnic origin, socio-economic status, disability, religion, age or sexual orientation. We believe all should feel welcome and have an equal chance to benefit from our school and everything it provides.

Hedgewood is a rights respecting school [drawn from the Human Rights Act 1998]. We ensure all pupils are aware of their human rights through policy and practice throughout the school:

- You have the right to life
- You have the right to an identity
- You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs
- You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion
- You have the right to special education and care
- You have the right to get information that is important to your well being
- You have the right to privacy

1. Legal framework

1.1 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

1.2 This policy also has due regard for non-statutory guidance, including the following: DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'

1.3 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy

1.4 The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

1.5 For the purpose of this policy, the Equality Act 2010 will be referred to as ‘the Act’.

1.6 The school fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities.

1.7 Protected characteristics, under the Act, are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnicity
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

1.8 The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions.
- In the way it provides education for pupils.
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

1.9 The responsible body for the school is the governing board or the LA.

1.10 The school’s liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the school, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between school and pupil, such as the provision of references on former pupils or access to “old pupils” communications and activities

1.11 The school will promote equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants and will work in line with the Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

2. Principles and aims

2.1 We see all pupils and potential pupils, and their parents, as of equal value, regardless of any protected characteristic.

2.2 Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic.

2.3 The school will promote race equality and have due regard to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.

2.4 The school will promote disability equality, ensuring equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and disability-related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.

2.5 The school will promote gender equality by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, and promote the equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.

2.6 Transgender people are explicitly covered by the PSED. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'transgender' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

2.7 The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the community.

2.8 The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system.

2.9 The school will ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations. School Admissions are regulated and controlled by the Local Authority and will not discriminate against any protected characteristic in any way.

2.11 The school will:

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, given necessary training and support, and report progress to the governing body.
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, and ensure this E&D is promoted in all our policies, procedures and activities related to pupils, families, staff and visitors.
- Maintain good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development, and ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of any protected characteristic, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- Identify, reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that may already exist.
- Ensure that policies, procedures and activities benefit community and society through inclusivity and social cohesion.
- Ensure staff promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, , maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equality and challenging when this might not be the case..

3. Roles and responsibilities

Hedgewood GB will:

- Ensure that the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the PSED to publish equality objectives at least every four years commencing on the date of the last publication.
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the governing board.
- Proactively recruit high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy.

3.2 The Headteacher will:

- Implement this policy and its procedures.
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their induction and CPD.
- Ensure that all parents, visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the provisions of this policy.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.
- Report to governors progress regarding equality on an annual basis and publish this report on the school website. Objectives will be reviewed at least every 4 years.

3.3 Employees will:

- Be mindful of any incidents of harassment or bullying in the school.
- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying and report any major breaches of the policy to the headteacher.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the school's culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.
- Monitor pupils' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up-to-date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

3.4 Pupils will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other pupil or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values. • Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to their tutor, the Behaviour Lead or to another member of staff.
- Abide by all the school's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

3.5 The school will have an equality page on its website, in order to demonstrate how it is complying with the PSED in the Equality Act 2010, and advancing equality of opportunity.

4. Equality objectives

4.1 The school is committed to promoting the welfare and equality of all its staff, pupils and other members of the school community as set out below.

- Implement effective strategies to support pupils in all vulnerable groups
- ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils
- Monitor changes to the curriculum to ensure they result in good outcomes for pupils in all vulnerable groups, and to review the curriculum considering new performance measures
- Improve the quality of support for pupils in all vulnerable groups in the classroom
- Continue to explore the use of new technologies to support pupils in all vulnerable groups in accessing their learning.
- To provide an environment that is safe and welcoming; and where there is respect for self and others
- To encourage all pupils to develop a positive self-image by valuing all contributions
- To promote understanding and appreciation of others whatever age, ability, ethnic origin, gender, race, sexual orientation or social background
- To enhance awareness amongst all members of our school community of the discrimination and the need to combat it

- To prepare our pupils for adulthood in which they respect for the diversity of human experience.
- The school will update all published equality documentation annually and will publish its objectives at least every four years.
- To have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, with the Local Authority other educational and healthcare professionals to identify barriers to learning and develop strategies to support all pupils.
- To collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement
- To take action to close any gaps, for example, monitoring those with below expected progress and developing strategies to ensure the best educational outcomes for all.

We collect and analyse relevant data s set out below, in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements

- the school population by gender and ethnicity
 - the % of pupils identified as having a particular special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability
 - the school population for whom additional funding has been received (Pupil Premium; Sports Premium; Catch-up Tutoring)
 - We report on end of key stage data to the DFE.
 - We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance.
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils
 - We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving
 - We use positive and affirming language for all regardless of race, gender, disability and sexuality
 - In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers.
- We have small classes with high adult:pupil ratios. We are able to give pupils individual time and support in order to meet their needs or specific protected characteristic. In exceptional cases, where pupils do need consistent high levels of support we will allocate additional one to one staffing to provide consistent support. We will also be flexible in our curriculum and teaching to enable the learner to receive the support they need. We have developed and implemented a programme on ASC Awareness for some of our pupils to support their emerging understanding of the impact on them (and others) of their autism.

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by the protected characteristics (where possible) and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Recognise the individuality of every learner and ensure their learning is personalised as much as possible;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the organisation's population and local community in terms of the protected characteristics, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory

behaviour or prejudice;

- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own identity and culture and celebrate the diversity within our community, the local context and wider;
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education sometimes through focused, translator supported workshops eg for our Tamil parents; our Somali parents
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches which are inclusive..

5. Collecting and using information

The school will collect equality information for the purpose of:

- Identifying key issues, .
- Taking positive adaptive action

Any personal data the school collects will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

6. Publishing information

The school will publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the Act.

7. Action to Promote Equality

In order to meet our objectives, the school has identified the following priorities:

- The school will provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to a pupil's educational needs (reasonable adjustment).
- Staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the school will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- The school will ensure that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying is taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.
- There will be differential schemes of work designed to meet the abilities and learning styles of all pupils.
- There will be a clearly defined disciplinary system stipulated in the Behaviour & Safety Policy, which will be consistently enforced.
- The school will ensure access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum and will take necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, enabling them to take as full a part as possible in the activities of the school.
- The school will ensure there is adequate access to the physical environment of the school.
- The school will improve the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people.
- The school will work with the LA staff, outside agencies and local schools.

8. Addressing prejudice-related incidents

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice.

The school will ensure that pupils and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice

We will deal immediately with issues as they arise through due process as set out in our Complaints Policy .

10. Curriculum

All pupils will be entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need, and we take every opportunity to promote and advance equality.

We have developed appropriate curriculum pathways for all pupils in all vulnerable groups.

The school will ensure PSHE lessons are designed for pupils to develop their knowledge of the world and the importance of equality. (Connect curriculum; RHE)

It provides opportunities for girls and boys to develop interests and skills in all areas and activities.

It encourages pupils to recognise that communities here and in other parts of the world have their own values, traditions and everyday living patterns.

It encourages awareness of other cultures

The school curriculum reflects an awareness of the ethnic, gender, class, ability, experiences, age and special needs of all pupils.

It promotes understanding and valuing of ethnic difference and gender equality and caters for all abilities in both content and delivery.