

## Equality Policy

Vision statement: *"The aim of The Grey Coat Hospital is to enable students to take charge of their learning, make decisions based on Christian values, live in the world as independent women and men and meet the challenges of the twenty-first century."*

The Grey Coat Hospital is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards 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.

### **Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles**

- 1. All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- 2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- 4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- 5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- 6. We have the highest expectations of all our pupils.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
- 7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

## **Purpose of the policy**

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or staff, or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

### **The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”**

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Advance equality of opportunity between different groups

Foster good relations between different groups

### **Two “specific duties”**

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty by April 6th 2012
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable by April 6th 2012

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

## **Development of the policy**

This policy has been developed in consultation with pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers. It is part of our commitment to promoting equalities and ensuring an inclusive school.

When developing the policy, we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted inspection framework, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality

Act are also included in related school policies such as the Disability Equality Statement and the Disability Access Plan, our SharePoint platform, and the school website.

There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEN and anti-bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and school council. The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this are found in our recruitment policy.

### **What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the ways we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.

We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.

We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day life of the school.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

### **Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance**

The school Policy on Behaviour - takes full account of the duties under the Equality Act 2010. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and act promptly to address concerns.

### **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-based bullying**

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality;

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs,
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum,
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes.

## **What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups**

We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.

We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions data and contact with parents and primary schools.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills.

We collect, analyse and publish data;

- on the school population by gender and ethnicity,
- on the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability,
- by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English,
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English.

We publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups of significant size at the end of each key stage:

- Ethnic groups
- Pupil Premium
- Free School Meals
- EAL
- SEND
- Non-statemented or EHCP SEN and SEN statements or EHCP
- Looked after Children

We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.

We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners.

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 are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as 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 that may already exist between, for example;

- disabled and non-disabled people,

- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds,
- and girls and boys in our sixth form.

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

### **Positive Action**

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

### **What we are doing to foster good relations**

We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship and across the curriculum.

We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.

We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.

We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.

We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.

We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, collective worship, assemblies, visitors, whole school events.

We include Equalities matters in our Newsletters to parents and Carers.

### **Other ways we address equality issues**

We maintain records of all training relating to the Equalities.

Our monitoring records include evaluations of aspects of Equalities.

We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed.

We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well-being of our pupils.

The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- review relevant feedback from the annual parents' evening questionnaires, parent-school forum and/or focus meetings,
- secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events,
- review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school,
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Academic Tutorial Day Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support,
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's working groups.

**Publishing Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan/ School Development Plan)**

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we **achieve improved outcomes** for the different groups. We produce Equality data analysis which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

**Our Equality Objectives for the academic year 2021/22 are:**

- All pupils to make at least expected progress across KS2-4 including in English and Mathematics
- Reduce the disparity between Pupil Premium and Non-Pupil Premium pupils' achievement in English and Mathematics by raising the achievement of the Pupil Premium pupils

- Monitor the percentage of suspensions for pupils with SEND against national data and put in place personalised plans to reduce the number of repeat suspensions
- Achieve a year-on-year reduction in the percentage of pupils receiving repeated suspensions
- Increase participation by Pupil Premium pupils in after school clubs
- Increase participation by Pupil Premium pupils on overseas school trips

We produce a Pupil Premium Strategy and an Equality Action Plan to show how we will work towards these objectives. This is part of our school development plan.

### **Monitoring and reviewing objectives**

We review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

We publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents and carers, on the school website.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

### **Governing Body**

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys).

### **Headteacher and Leadership team**

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes. S/he will have expert and informed knowledge of the Equality Act.

### **Teaching and Support Staff**

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom,
- challenge prejudice and discrimination,
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur,
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability,
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils,
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult,
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure. We will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting at the start of each school year.

### **Visitors**

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters to enable them to do this.

### **Key contacts**

Staff responsible for equalities: Angela Loudon, Head of Inclusion/Senior Associate Leader  
Lead governor: Elizabeth Gibson

### **Equal Opportunities for staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made based on merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.



### **Monitoring and reviewing the policy**

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually and adjust as appropriate. Our review involves pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers.

### **Disseminating the Policy**

This Equality Policy is available:

- on the school website
- as part of induction for new staff
- On the shared staff area

We ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy, objectives and data through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

We publish on the school's website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs.