

## THE TONBRIDGE FEDERATION POLICY

Policy name	Equality and Diversity Policy
School in which policy applies	Hugh Christie & Long Mead C.P School
Date written	February 2022 (update)
Date agreed by Governing Body	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2022
Date of renewal	March 2023
Senior member of staff with oversight	Paul Bargery / Georgina Stevens
Governor with oversight	Sue Mason



## **Introduction**

The Tonbridge Federation is committed to inclusion, equality and fairness.

Equality and diversity is central to achieving this overall aim of the Federation. We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from our schools. We aim to make sure that no-one experiences less favourable treatment or discrimination because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Colour or national origin
- Gender
- Gender identity or reassignment
- Their marital or civil partnership status
- Being pregnant or recently having a baby
- Religious beliefs
- Sexual identity and orientation

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender, age 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 champions respect for all.

## **Meeting our Duties**

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, parents, carers and staff or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, age, marriage, or civil partnership status, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

### **The Public Sector Equality Duty or General Duty**

The general duty requires that all public organisations, including schools should:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

### **The Specific Duty**

The specific duty requires a designated public authority (which includes schools) to:

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty.
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

### **Race Equality**

This section of the scheme reflects the general and specific duties as detailed in The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which imposes a positive duty on schools to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

Our schools will meet this duty by:

- Celebrating our diversity through curriculum planning – incorporating an anti-racist and multi-cultural perspective in all curriculum areas
- Assemblies that celebrate diversity and promote equality within our schools
- Displays that reflect and validate the languages of the community and the life experience of the children in our school.
- Communication with parents – oral and written translation into community languages available on request and on the school website
- Ensuring that all new staff, parents and visitors on entry into school are made aware of our commitment, values and expectations through an induction meeting, information booklet for parents, School Prospectus and displayed values.
- Ensuring all staff including teachers, teaching assistants and admin staff have access to relevant INSET e.g. SMSC training and are given specific training in the understanding of the Single Equality Scheme and its implementation.
- Having procedures for dealing with, recording and reporting incidents of racial harassment and bullying that are consistent with LEA policies and guidance.
- Ensuring that incidents of racial discrimination or racial harassment are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently and in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures and that action is taken to support the victims.
- Ensuring that all pupils, staff and parents are made aware of the procedures for dealing with racist incidents, racial harassment and bullying and that such behaviour is unacceptable.
- Catering for the dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups and cultures enabling pupils to observe festivals and events relevant to their faith.
- Working with parents and carers and with the wider community, to tackle racial discrimination and to follow and promote good practice

## **Disability**

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs and Disability Offer.

The Disability Discrimination Act, (2006) requires us to have due regard to the following duties in all that we do:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Eliminate disability related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

## **The Definition of Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This includes 'hidden' impairments, such as mental illness, dyslexia, autism, speech & language, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diabetes or epilepsy.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.

The Tonbridge Federation also recognises that having a disability can be for a temporary period for some individuals and that some families experience disability through association e.g. family members.

### **Discrimination disabled people face**

Disabled people are discriminated against in a number of ways. These include:

- Discriminatory attitudes
- A lack of accessible information
- Inaccessible environments
- Services that have not been designed to take account of the needs of disabled people

### **Accessibility**

There is a specific disability legislation in relation to disabled pupils and accessibility which means we must plan strategically over time to:

- Increase access to the curriculum
- Make improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access
- Make written information accessible to pupils in a range of different ways

An accessibility plan will be published and reviewed on a regular basis and made available to all stakeholders and members of our community.

### **Gender Equality**

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have due regard to:

- Eliminating discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment
- Promote equality between men and women / boys and girls

We will meet this duty through ensuring that all staff are aware of the expectations set out in this policy, taking into account our duty to prevent FGM and ensuring that all staff are aware of the reporting procedure.

### **Transgender**

Transgendered people are explicitly covered by the Gender Equality Duty. The term transgendered refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within its school community.

### **Community Cohesion**

We also have a responsibility to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious, non-religious and socio-economic groups. We have incorporated our priorities into our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance in meeting our objectives.

### **Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Pregnancy and**

**Maternity** We must ensure that we do not discriminate on these grounds.

### **Development of the Scheme**

We involved pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers in creating the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan, either directly with the school community or through previous policy documents that have contributed to this development. This helped to ensure that the views of potentially disadvantaged groups were fully incorporated in the development of this scheme and action plan. We collect, analyse and publish data on the school population by gender, ethnicity, English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Special Educational Need or Disability. We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance of different groups. Hugh Christie and Long Mead are inclusive schools. The collection of information is crucial to supporting us in deciding what actions to take to

improve equality and eliminate discrimination within the school community. The wide range of information gathered to support our planning and action to promote equality includes the following:

- Identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different equality strands. This helps us develop and monitor the scheme. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language;
- Pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups
- Attendance levels relating to different groups
- Children and young people views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution for example interviews with the school council
- Participation in extra- curricular activities by groups of children
- Records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue
- Outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion
- Outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage
- Parent, Pupil and Staff questionnaires
- Reviews by the Governing Body
- Termly working party meetings

We are mindful of the laws relating to confidentiality when devising this scheme and action plan. Although there is a statutory duty to share information about the school's Single Equality Scheme (SES), we recognise that care must be taken when sharing or publishing statistics, data or information to ensure that any information published cannot be used to identify individuals. Our SES will pay due regard to the new GDPR regulations.

### **Links to other School Policies**

Although this Scheme 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 our School Development Plan (SDP), Raising Achievement Plan (RAP), School Website and Newsletters.

Other policies which have informed this Scheme and include references to equality include:

- SEN policy and SEND offer
- Culture, Conduct and Community Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Pupil Premium Action Plan
- Attendance Policy
- SMSC Policy

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the ways we comply with this are found in our Recruitment and Selection Policy.

### **Roles and Responsibilities for Implementing the Single Equality Scheme**

The following groups promote equality and eliminate discrimination by:

#### **The Executive Principal/Heads of School:**

- Demonstrates responsibilities under the Equality Act.
- Ensures that staff and parents are informed about the Single Equality Scheme.
- Ensures the scheme is implemented effectively

- Manages any day-to-day issues arising from the policy whether for pupils or for the school as an employer
- Ensures staff have access to training which helps to implement the Scheme
- Liaises with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- Monitors the Scheme and reports to the Governing Body, at least annually, on the effectiveness of the policy
- Ensures that the Senior Leadership Team are kept up-to-date with any developments affecting the policy objectives and connected action plan arising from the Scheme
- Provides appropriate support and monitoring for all pupils and specific and targeted pupils to whom the scheme has direct relevance, with assistance from relevant agencies
- Ensures CPD is inclusive of all staff and includes equality matters
- Ensures recruitment, selection and promotion of all staff (teaching, support and administrative), reflects fair and safer recruitment procedures
- Ensures that the voice of all stakeholders including parent/carers voice, pupil voice and staff voice is taken into account when making decisions

### **The Governing Body:**

- Ensures that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation
- Has a duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination
- Ensures policies are inclusive of equality and are written in conjunction with this scheme
- Ensures all governors receive up to date training in all the equalities duties
- Designates a governor with specific responsibility for the Single Equality Scheme that attends the working party
- Establishes that the action plans arising from the scheme are part of the School Development Plan
- Supports the Executive Principal/Heads of School in implementing any objectives necessary
- Informs and consult with parents about the scheme
- Evaluates and reviews the objectives annually
- Assesses the potential impact of decisions made upon equalities

### **The Senior Leadership Team:**

- Has responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this Scheme
- Sensitively encouraging declaration of equality strand identity by children and young people, parents/carers, staff and other users of the school
- Provides a lead in the collection and dissemination of information relating to the Scheme
- Identifies good quality resources and CPD opportunities to support implementation of the Scheme
- With the Executive Principal/Heads of School, provides advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- Assists in implementing reviews of this Scheme as detailed in the School Development Plan
- Evaluates and review the objectives annually
- Ensures coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues
- Ensures the curriculum promotes pupils' SMSC and British Values development
- Ensure the peer support programme within the school promotes understanding
- Working with trade unions to implement the gender and age duties in employment functions
- Setting up the working party, with membership to include: SLT member/Inclusion leader, Governor, Parent/carers, Teacher, Teaching Assistant and input from School Council representatives
- In the event of expectations not being met, ensures action is taken in accordance with the status of those involved

**The working party:**

Our working party is involved throughout the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the SES. The key functions of the working party are:

- to ensure the involvement of the widest possible range of people representing the different equality strands
- to ensure the involvement of trade unions when necessary, regarding the equalities duties
- to arrange for the gathering of information relating to all equality strands
- to consider arrangements for impact assessments
- to report to the leadership team on outcomes of information gathering and impact assessment

**Parents/Carers**

- Have access to the Scheme via the School Website
- Are encouraged to support the Scheme.
- Have the opportunity to attend any relevant meetings/awareness raising sessions related to the Scheme.
- Have the opportunity to put forward suggestions/ ideas for discussion by the working party
- Have the right to be informed of any incident related to this Scheme which could directly affect their child
- Are informed of objectives, published annually

**School Staff:**

- Accept that this is a whole school issue and support the Single Equality Scheme
- Make known any queries or training requirements
- Know how to deal with incidents of concern and how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping
- Know procedures for reporting prejudice driven behaviour, including incidents of racism, harassment or other forms of discrimination
- Do not discriminate on racial, disability or other grounds
- Keep themselves up to date with relevant legislation and attend training and information events organised by the school or LA
- Ensure that pupils from all groups are included in all activities and have full access to the curriculum
- Promote equality and diversity through teaching, pedagogy, curriculum, the learning environment and through relations with pupils, staff, parents and the wider community
- Support the implementation of objectives through key action points

**Pupils:**

- Are made aware of any relevant part of the Scheme, appropriate to age and ability
- Are expected to act in accordance with any relevant part of the Scheme
- Experience a curriculum and environment which is respectful of diversity and difference and prepares them well for life in a diverse society
- Understand the importance of reporting discriminatory bullying and racially motivated incidents
- Understand their role in supporting the implementation of objectives (where relevant)

**Visitors:**

- Visitors and contractors are responsible for complying with the school's Equality Scheme – non-compliance will be dealt with by the Head of School.

Should a complaint need to be made regarding Equality please read the school's Complaint policy that can be found on the school website or requested from the school office.

Our admission form gives parents the opportunity to share information about themselves and their child, in line with the Equality Act 2010. This information is used to inform our SES scheme and ensure that policy and practice is appropriate for the needs of each individual. All admission information is available in a range of different languages.

### **Outcomes for Pupils**

Outcomes for pupils at both schools are published on our websites.

### **Objectives**

This Scheme is supported by annually published equality objectives; their progress is monitored and evaluated regularly by the Governing Body.

We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them. Although there is no specific duty to produce an action plan, we believe that an action plan ensures a proactive response to achieving our objectives and helps us to demonstrate 'due regard'

The action plan identifying the equality objectives for the school and the impact analysis has:

- Clear allocation of responsibility.
- Clear allocation of resources, human and financial.
- Clear timescales.
- Expected outcomes and performance criteria.
- Specified dates for review.
  
- The School's Self-evaluation Form.
- Governor's minutes

## **Reporting**

- There will be an annual report on this scheme demonstrating the above findings and including information gathered during the year. This report will be published as follows
- On the school's website
- Be available to all school members in hard copy, and in the form of alternative communication where necessary

## **Publicising our Scheme**

The Single Equalities Scheme will be available to all persons on request and explained to all stakeholders through:

- School website
- Governing Body meetings
- Staff meetings
- A paper copy available on request

## **Monitoring**

- The effectiveness of this Single Equality Scheme will be evaluated by the working party and the Governing Body