



Equality & Diversity Policy

Updated: July 2024

Next Review Date: July 2028

Introduction

We pride ourselves on being an inclusive school, where we celebrate diversity and difference and acknowledge the richness that this brings to our school community. We aim to provide opportunities for all children to access a broad, balanced and creative curriculum, regardless of age, attainment, ethnicity, language or background.

Our values encourage all stakeholders to display the behaviours expected of a member of our school community: courage, trust, enjoyment, partnership, equality, excellence. All members of our community are of equal worth.

The equalities policy is an umbrella policy which covers and is inseparably linked to every other school policy including; special educational needs and disabilities (SEND, equal opportunities, safeguarding, health and safety, behaviour, curriculum, teaching and learning, continued professional development and anti-bullying.

We believe that the Equality Act 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 and promote the idea 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. Also, 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 children.** 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.

We aim to:

- Value everyone in our community as individuals in their own right
- Ensure equal access for all to the curriculum
- Understand the multi-cultural nature of our community
- Foster inclusive attitudes
- Ensure our staff feel valued

The Law

Our legal duties are set out in the Equality Act 2010. This Act brings together lots of different equality laws, many of which have existed for a long time. By doing this, the Act makes equality law simpler and easier to understand. As a school we have duties under the Act towards people with protected characteristics.

For pupils these are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Race
5. Religion or belief
6. Sex
7. Sexual orientation

For staff these include:

8. Marriage and civil partnership
9. Pregnancy and maternity

Our legal duties are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people from different backgrounds

We can also take positive action to tackle pupils' different needs or disproportionately low participation of a particular pupil group. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged pupil group.

Implementation

We want equality to be at the heart of all our school policies so we will assess the impact of policies on equality in the school's policy review cycle. It is important that all staff and governors fully understand equality issues so that they put them into practice daily in all areas of school life. We will provide necessary training to ensure they are clear about their responsibilities on diversity and equality related issues.

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.

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'.

Types of discriminatory incidents

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their race, colour, religion, nationality, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Use of derogatory names/terms, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges, insignia or clothing
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Incitement of others to discriminate against or bully a person due to race, colour, religion, nationality, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for any other personal characteristic e.g. food, clothing, personal appearance etc.
- Refusal to co-operate or associate with those who possess one of the 9 characteristics or other personal characteristic

How do we eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation?

- Ensuring that all staff read and understand the Code of Conduct for Schools and sign the Staff Code of Conduct – Declaration Form (**Appendix 1**)
- Ensuring that all staff know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping and to support the full range of diverse needs according to pupils' individual circumstances.
- Expecting staff to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur
- Ensuring in the event of any incident in school relating to discrimination, harassment and victimisation that procedures are followed and incidents are recorded and dealt with through the appropriate channels
- Monitoring and reporting such incidents to the Head teacher and reporting racist incidents to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.
- Supporting students and families who encounter harassment in the community, understanding that children who live in fear cannot learn.
- Using opportunities in school and assemblies to deal with issues of prejudice and discrimination.
- Supporting staff, students and their families who encounter harassment on school premises by people who are not employees of the school,
- Encouraging staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning.
- Exploring opportunities throughout the curriculum to promote anti-racism and inclusion, e.g. visits to community organisations, places of religious worship, use of the media, visiting speakers from local minority ethnic communities and disabled people's organisations.
- Purchasing and reviewing resources, such as books, posters and ICT software to ensure they are inclusive.
- Ensuring our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

- Ensuring at the admission interview that all parents are aware and support our policy

How do we promote equality of opportunity?

Curriculum, teaching and learning and behaviour:

- Promoting an inclusive curriculum that reflects the needs of all the students.
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping.
- Recognising and providing for the individual learning styles of our pupils through our highly differentiated curriculum as well as the use of appropriate methods in lessons.
- Displaying work from all pupils with achievements in any areas of the curriculum in and outside the school.
- Running a programme of cultural enrichment both on and off site tailored to include participation by all pupils.
- Taking active steps to ensure that resources in all areas of the curriculum are inclusive
- Ensuring equality and diversity are promoted and discrimination challenged in all areas of the curriculum.
- Ensuring the allocation of students to teaching groups and after school activities is fair and equitable.
- Ensuring all staff are skilled to engage and support students and challenge stereotypes.
- In the School Behaviour Policy and behaviour support strategies developed, recognising and addressing the individual needs of students and aiming to develop students' ability to self-regulate and manage their own behaviour as much as possible.
- Liaison with relevant outside agencies to support parents/carers particularly those of our highly vulnerable pupils or those who themselves have learning difficulties or mental health issues.

Assessment:

- Using contextual data to monitor and improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students.
- Taking account of the achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Ensuring all parents/carers are regularly informed of their child's progress and achievement
- Using contextual data to monitor the opinions of parents/carers on the quality of provision their child receives and how we may improve this

Attendance:

- Monitoring attendance by all students and using the data to develop strategies to identify, address and resolve any issues
- Making reasonable provision for students and staff to authorise absence for religious observance

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development:

- Ensuring all our staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit, ability and in compliance with the law.
- Wherever possible considering positive action in our recruitment to ensure our staff group reflects the cultural diversity of our community as well as meets the challenges of our most vulnerable pupils.
- Monitoring and reviewing the recruitment and retention process to ensure discrimination is not taking place.
- Considering equality aspects when promoting staff or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

- Proactively taking steps to identify, support and provide opportunities for the professional development of staff from all groups.
- Providing information and training on the needs of our pupils for nonteaching staff such as the administration, premises and catering staff
- As far as is possible by adapting our school environment to meet the cultural and faith practices of our staff
- Facilitating access to the school for vulnerable parents, (such as those with learning difficulties or mental health issues), through the use of the Family Support Worker, translators and where appropriate, representatives from outside agencies, at Parents' Evenings, Annual Reviews and other meetings.
- Welcoming and respecting parents into the school seeking their views and involvement.

How do we promote good relations between people from different backgrounds?

- Providing opportunities for students to participate in and celebrate their own culture as well as the richness and diversity of those of others, e.g. Black History Month, Eid, AUTISM Awareness week
- Encouraging parents from different groups to become school governors.
- Adapting information giving (eg school newsletter) to meet the needs of our pupils and their parents/carers where they themselves may have learning difficulties

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of governors:

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this Policy and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

The role of the Head teacher:

- It is the Head teacher's role to implement the school's Equality & Diversity Policy and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the Head teacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality & Diversity Policy, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Head teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Head teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The Head teacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

All staff will:

- ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Head teacher
- be models of equal opportunities through their words and actions

Monitoring:

- To enact the content of the objectives set
- To monitor annually the action Plan to see if all actions have taken place
- To hold annual SLT (Senior Leadership Team) discussion on the content of the policy
- To feedback to Governors at Full Governing Body meetings

Evaluation

- To check if the objectives have had a positive impact
- To review and amend the set objectives
- To set new objectives as appropriate
- To include feedback in the annual report to Governors
- To review the policy every 4 years

Equality Objectives

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- To establish a curriculum which addresses the core deficits of pupils with autism and learning difficulties and ensures progression across Key stages and challenges the more able.
- Ensure that parental representation on the governing body reflects the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity in the school.
- Ensure that staff in roles throughout the school reflect the ethnic, cultural religious and any other diversity of the student body.

Appendix 1:

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATION FORM

This form relates to the Council and School's Code of Conduct for employees. The Code applies to all employees. Copies were issued to all employees in 1994, and are sent to new staff with their contract documentation. If you need a replacement copy of the Code, please contact your SmartHR.

You are required to read and complete this form carefully, and to sign it, even if you have no interests or other information to declare. This signed copy should be returned to your departmental Human Resources section, where it will be held on the Register of Interests for your department.

Copies of Departmental Registers are open to inspection by those Councillors or Council Officers who have responsibilities to act for the Council as your employer, or who can demonstrate some other legitimate reason to inspect these records. Registers are not open to inspection by the general public.

The Council and School's Code of Conduct requires you to declare information and answer questions as set out below. If you have any queries, or are in doubt as to whether you should declare an interest, you need to seek advice from SmartHR, and you may also wish to consult your trade union for advice.

NAME

POST AND GRADE

FINANCIAL INTERESTS

You must declare any **financial interests** you have in any matter involving the Council. This includes details of any contractor or company that has done business with the Council (or which may in future do business with the Council) with which you, your spouse or partner, or other close relative are involved.

Examples of interest, which must be declared are financial contracts, purchasing contracts, building contracts, grant of planning permission, leasing or renting of property, purchase of property and the development of sites. This list is not intended to be an exhaustive one. Nature of interest (please give name and address of contractor, business or company, along with brief details of the nature of the interest and date at which it started. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

OTHER PERSONAL INTERESTS

You must declare any other **personal or non-financial interests, which** may lead to a conflict between your interests and those of the Authority. Even if you do not think there is a conflict of interest, if it is possible that a member of the public would view the situation as one in which a conflict might arise, you should err on the side of caution and declare the interest anyway. For example:

1. Do you act as a school governor within a school maintained by LBHF? **YES/NO**

If yes, give details

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2. Do you have any involvement with any voluntary organisation, which **YES/NO** receives funding, grant aid or other support (e.g. subsidised premises) from the Council?

If yes, give details

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3. Are you a Freemason, or a member of a society to which Para 10.3 of **YES/NO** the Council's Code of Conduct applies? (i.e. an organisation not open to the Public without formal membership or commitment of allegiance, or which Has secrecy or privacy about rules of membership or conduct).

If yes, give details

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4. Are you involved in or a member of any local organisation or pressure groups which may seek to influence the policies of LBHF on any issue? **YES/NO**
(excluding political parties and trade unions)

If yes, give details

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5. Are you aware of any other personal interests, which you feel you should declare, as creating possible conflicts of interest with the Council? **YES/NO**

If yes, give details

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If you are in doubt as to whether any of your personal interest create a conflict, you should either include relevant information or seek advice from your manager or departmental Human Resources section.

ADDITIONAL APPOINTMENTS AND SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT

Employees on APT&C Scales 1-6 inclusive, and blue-collar employees, are not required to inform their management of secondary employment carried out in their own time. They do need to be aware that any such activity must not conflict with, or have any detrimental effect on the Council (or should be declared above if it results in a financial or personal interest).

(To be completed only by APT&C staff on SO1 or above)

APT&C employees on SO1 and above are required to seek written consent for **secondary employment or additional paid or unpaid appointments**, by writing to their management or departmental Human Resources section. This would include e.g. freelance training, consultancy, or any form or part-time job or commission.

Please tick

Appropriate box

I have previously declared separately details of any secondary employment/additional appointments.

I am now declaring such details, and attaching them to this form.

I have no secondary employment or additional appointments to declare.

DECLARATION

You must complete, sign and return this form even if you have no interests to declare. Failure to declare a relevant interest may lead to disciplinary action, and failure to declare financial interests can also result in criminal proceedings under section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972.

I hereby declare that I have been issued with and have read a copy of the Council's Code of Conduct, and that the information provided in this declaration is full and accurate.

Should there be relevant changes in my circumstances prior to the next update of the Register, I undertake to advise my management of these in writing, without delay.

Signed Date