

**Equality Information and Objectives  
including Equality Policies  
2015**

**Ratified by the Personnel Committee November 2015  
to be reviewed Autumn 2018**

## Vision and Values

Highgate Wood School is a fully inclusive school with a mission of:

*Making a positive difference to our students' achievements and experiences, maintaining the highest expectations and inspiring self-belief*

All of our students are encouraged to aim for excellence and to fulfil their individual potential - academically, socially and personally. We want them to become successful, confident and caring adults who will be able to play an active part in society where adaptability, enterprise, perseverance and consideration for others are increasingly important. Our strong commitment to equality of opportunity and equality of esteem and self-belief is intended to ensure that all students, regardless of ability, aptitude or background, can fulfil their potential.

We expect our students to have high aspirations; their academic progress and examination success are ensured by top quality teaching, first rate facilities and challenging targets. Our school motto is *Everyone Matters* and this ensures that we take an approach that values every student as an individual, with a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities enabling talent and creativity to be identified and nurtured. Traditional values of *courtesy, consideration, contribution and cooperation* (the 4Cs) underpin the school's behaviour ethos; we take great pride in the warm personal relationships which exist and the involvement of all students in some form of community or charitable service.

Our aims for our students are that they:

- achieve their full potential, including the highest standards of academic achievement
- feel valued and value others
- become confident, self-reliant and caring members of society
- understand themselves and develop a critical awareness of the world in which they live
- work in a learning environment in which they feel safe and secure
- make maximum use of the technology available to assist learning.

As a rights respecting school we believe that all children have the right to The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. The Convention applies to everyone, whatever their race, religion or ability (Article 2). Children who have any kind of disability should have special care and support (Article 23).

In fulfilling our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

### Principles:

1. All students, families and staff are of equal value.

We see all students, potential students, their parents and carers, and staff as 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 and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual orientation
- whatever their marital status
- whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- whatever their age.

2. We recognise and respect difference.

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or students may face in relation to their protected characteristics.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff.

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.

6. We consult and involve stakeholders to ensure views are heard.

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including students who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting students, we will take account of views expressed at school council; for parents, through parent governor representation and for staff, through staff governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion.

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum offer foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence.

9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives.

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7).

## **Rationale**

We believe that all students and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation.

We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our students, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This School Equality Policy brings together action plans for race, gender and disability equality, thus meeting the school's statutory duties in these areas. It also goes beyond these three streams and begins to consider how the school develops its approach to equalities and diversity for all our students, staff and their parents and carers. We are also committed to responding to all diversity related legislation and feel that a single school equality scheme is the best mechanism for achieving this.

The scheme also highlights how the school has worked with and listened to the staff, students, parents and carers to inform development of action plans and the need and commitment required to ensure the scheme is a success.

As well as delivering high quality services to its students, the school is also committed to being a good employer and as such this scheme outlines how we meet our varied duties in terms of recruitment and employment practices.

## **Context**

Highgate Wood School is a nine form entry community school situated in Hornsey in North London. The school serves a mixed and changing catchment area. Children come to Highgate Wood School from a wide area and range of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is well above average with 56 ethnic groups represented and 55 community languages spoken. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average at 15.5%. Significant numbers of students are disadvantaged and therefore entitled to pupil premium funding (35%)

## **Legal Background**

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010. The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status (applicable only to staff).

The Specific Duties of the Act enable schools to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

The Equality Act 2010 protects students from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- ethnicity and race
- gender
- gender identity and reassignment
- pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- marriage and partnership

We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

At Highgate Wood School we implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum
- improving the physical environment of our school to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled students.

We also recognise that we have a duty to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. This helps us to demonstrate how we are meeting the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002, in our provision of SMSC.

We make regular assessments of students' learning and use this information to track student progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, socio-economic

factors, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of students are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

### **Publishing the plan**

In order to meet the specific duty to comply with the public sector equality duty, we will:

- publish our school's Equality policy and plan on the school website
- raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communication
- make sure hard copies are available.

Application of the principles in this policy statement - policy and practice can be found in Appendix A.

Signed:

Date:

## Appendix A

### Application of the principles in this policy statement - policy and practice

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways:

#### Teaching and learning

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

- use progress data (contextualised where appropriate) to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students
- monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps
- take account of the achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice
- provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning
- include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our students.

#### Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors. Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

#### Equality and staffing

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, support staff, and student teachers) from discrimination on the ground of gender, transsexual status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. With regard to disability, we make reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a person who is not disabled. This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, in terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, wherever possible, we make efforts to ensure diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators. We will provide training and support for staff to enable them to deal effectively with prejudice-related incidents.

We will actively tackle discrimination and anti-bullying by reporting and recording all forms of prejudice related incidents, for example racism homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism.

### **Employer duties**

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

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff
- continued professional development opportunities for all staff
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

### **Race Equality**

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare a school Equality Plan which includes our written policy for race equality
- assess the impact of our policies, including the Equalities Plan, on students, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these students
- monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such students, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.



## Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs/Inclusion Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

### Definition of disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (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'.

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
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### Legal duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encouraging participation in public life by disabled people
- taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare and publish the school's Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them
- set every three years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aim of the equality duty

### Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of

opportunity between female and male students and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment
- oppose any discrimination against a woman because of her pregnancy and/or maternity leave
- promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare and publish the school's Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them
- review and revise this scheme every three years.

### **Sexual Orientation**

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The role of governors**

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 and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to students, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and 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 students.

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 governing body is committed to equality for all in appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings

with students and parents of the school. The governing body recognise the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce. The governing body and managers of the school will operate at all times within the requirements of anti-discrimination legislation and will promote equality positively in its staffing decisions. All decisions including advertising of vacancies, short listing, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion, terms and conditions of employment, dismissal and pay will be based on fair assessment of need. The only personal characteristics to be taken into account will be those which are necessary for the requirements and proper performance of work involved.

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 Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and to ensure that all staff are aware of the School Equality Plan, and that staff apply these guidelines fairly in all situations. The Headteacher he is supported by the Senior Leadership Team and the governing body in doing so.

The Headteacher and senior leadership team will ensure the school equality scheme is aligned with the school development plan - its implementation will be monitored within the school's self-evaluation and other review processes

The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities

The Headteacher 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 Headteacher 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 support staff**

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy. They will:

- ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan
- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- 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 Senior Leadership Team
- support other staff members and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents
- teach balanced views of other countries and identify similarities to ourselves.

### **Tackling discrimination**

The Equality Act 2010 defines discrimination as ‘treating a person less favourably because of a protected characteristic, the perception that they have a protected characteristic or because of a person’s association with someone who has a protected characteristic.’ Indirect discrimination is the unjustifiable application of a provision, criterion or practice, even though it is applied to everyone.

Harassment or victimisation on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

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 student’s individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / Headteacher where necessary. All incidents are recorded in SIMs.

### **What is a discriminatory incident?**

Harassment or victimisation 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.

Potentially, 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 that can occur are:

- physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender
- use of derogatory names, insults and jokes
- racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti
- provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia
- bringing discriminatory material into school
- verbal abuse and threats
- incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim’s race, disability, gender or sexual orientation
- discriminatory comments in the course of discussion

- attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups
- ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc
- refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

### **Responding to and reporting incidents**

It should be clear to students and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and support staff, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

Our suggested procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below.

1. Following an incident a member of staff to investigate further (if incident reported) or challenge behaviour immediately.
2. A response will be made to the victim and family.
3. A response will be made to the perpetrator and family.
4. Information to be recorded in SIMs if the perpetrator is a student or in writing and forwarded to the Headteacher if the perpetrator is a member of staff or a visitor to the school.
5. Action taken to address issue with year group / school if necessary e.g. through tutor periods and assembly.

## Appendix B

### Equalities Information

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marital status, sexual orientation, religion and belief and sexual orientation).

### Engagement - Participation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it must be informed by the input of staff, students and parents and carers. There are a number of ways in which this can be achieved:

- input from staff surveys and through staff meetings / INSET
- input from parent surveys
- feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, school surveys on children's attitudes
- conferencing of vulnerable children and children with identified needs
- issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support
- feedback at Governing body meetings
- contact with the local community and disability organisations.

When deciding what to do to tackle equality issues, we will consult and engage both with people affected by our decisions - parents, students, staff, members of the local community – and with people who have special knowledge which can inform the school's approach, such as disability equality groups and other relevant special interest organisations. Evidence of this engagement will be included in published information showing how the duty has been addressed.

The school team has used relevant student related data based on the Autumn 2015 census as well as the RAISEonline 2014 Summary Report to develop the school's equality objectives.

### Equality Objectives

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other
- conduct under the Act

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### **Impact assessments**

We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender. We value more qualitative information which may be given to us through a variety of mechanisms. We conduct student voice activities such as anti-bullying questionnaires.

We work collaboratively with the Local Authority to access a range of services which support the equality agenda and help us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the particular groups.

When procuring goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure equality issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

### **Our School's Equality Objectives**

Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objective(s):

1. To eliminate the gap between boys and girls achievement by 2018.
2. To eliminate the gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium students by 2018
3. To map all extra-curricular activities to determine how inclusive our offer is. Where areas of underrepresentation are identified, to actively pursue strategies to address them.  
By 2018 all extra-curricular activities will be more representative of school population.
4. To analyse and review exclusion data by gender, ethnicity and levels of disadvantage and to plan to reduce over representation of particular groups.  
By 2018 there will be no over representation of groups with protected status in exclusion figures.
5. To actively encourage the recruitment of school governors who reflect the ethnic makeup of the school community.  
By 2018 the school governing body will reflect the ethnic makeup of the school community.

6. To ensure that the school site is fully accessible to disabled users and that the needs of disabled students, staff and visitors are carefully considered at all times.