

Hartsfield JMI School



Equality Policy

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Chair of Governors: Mrs S.
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Equality Policy

Why we have developed this Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for Hartsfield School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around Equality including those for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the Protected Characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. It should be read alongside policies listed in Appendix A

The Equality Act protects pupils, staff and parents from discrimination and harassment based on the 'Protected Characteristics' of:

- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Sexual orientation.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community, pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies; who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development. It is shared on our website with the whole community, along with data about bullying of those in the protected groups.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to our General Equality Duty (under the Act).

LEGAL BACKGROUND: Overall aims of our Equality Policy

Our General Duty under the Equality Act 2010 is:

- To **eliminate** discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To **promote equality/ equity** of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and **foster good relationships** between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

Our approach

We seek to embed equality/ equity of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We actively seek out opportunities, in all aspects of school life, to embrace the following key concepts:

- **Shared Humanity.** Identifying and valuing commonality and shared values.
- **Valuing difference and diversity.** We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better.
- **Interaction.** We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles pupils will impact on, and inform, each other.
- **Social cohesion** within our school and within our local community.
- **Personal and cultural identity.** We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities.
- **Fairness and social justice.** We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society.

Our Vision Statement about Equality

Our school seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment, discrimination and violence.

- All learners and their families are equally valued
- We recognise and respect differences
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships
- We strive to have good equality practices in staff recruitment, retention and development
- We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers

We recognise and respect that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive, through **reasonable adjustments**, to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. **We therefore cannot always achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same, we may need an equitable approach.**

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and foster positive attitudes and learning between and towards others, to create cohesive communities.

The Roles and Responsibilities within our School Community

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information

- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it
- Apply principles of equality in fair recruitment of staff.
- Ensure training is updated on an annual basis at least- for example on popular offensive terminology children may use

Our Governing Body will:

- ensure that the agreed objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan and monitor progress within the school's self-evaluation and review process
- support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary

Our Pupils will:

- be involved in development of the objectives, for example at School Council
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy and respect difference in others

Our Parents/Carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the Policy
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child

Our School Staff will:

- provide all pupils with equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements
- report any known or perceived harassment or victimisation to the Headteacher
- Attend and take an active part in relevant training including courses to help individuals covered by the requirements of the Prevent duty and Child Protection
- Challenge any manifestations of unintended bias in each other
- Be aware that pupils who also have SEN may find it additionally difficult to report incidents and require additional support or different strategies (e.g. drawing) to do so.

Practice at our school

The development of this policy has involved the whole of our school community. We review this policy regularly (bi-annually, unless there is new legislation or advice)

We look for ways to challenge stereotypical views and to increase awareness of the range of diversity in our school community, thus normalising it and preparing our pupils for a life in a diverse society. We do this through our teaching of PHSE, RE and through our promotion of British values in all that we do. Pupils take part in regular assemblies where issues of equality and equity are discussed. Other curriculum areas take opportunities as they present themselves to promote issues of equality- for example in Geography or History.

As part of our monitoring of educational outcomes for all children, we consider the achievement and progress of pupils who may have a protected characteristic and compare them with those who do not.

In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways. Through our secure safeguarding monitoring system CPOMS, we collect a range

of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, faith, disability and gender. We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil voice, less formally or even anonymously. We use this information to formulate future practice.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. This includes our work with outside agencies such as NHS, CAMHs, Attendance Improvement and our local community police. We will also work with charities who can support our sharing positive information with pupils.

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, office and site staff and student teachers) from discrimination based on the Protected Characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled. This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that there is equity of opportunity for all. We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators. We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers; TAs and HILTAs; Mid-day Supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination on the grounds of gender, transsexual status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to equality and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

We will provide any necessary training to staff to help them understand their equality duties and the differing needs of protected groups within our school community and to help them to deal with any possible prejudice related incidents.

Actions decided upon as necessary, are included in our School Improvement Plan and our accessibility plan.

Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying (also see our anti-bullying policy)

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice-based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society sometimes struggle with difference of any kind (actual or perceived), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the

experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

Measures for countering bullying of any type at Hartsfield

Any form of bullying will be treated seriously. The School will make it clear that bullying and racist behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All such incidents will be responded immediately. All incidents of perceived or actual bullying will be investigated and reported to the Headteacher using our CPOMS digital system. Any incidents that could be indicator of extremism or radicalisation will be reported to the police directly.

We will take necessary steps to deal with all forms of bullying (perceived or actual) including physical, verbal, indirect bullying and cyber-bullying.

- All cases will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter. The Headteacher will consider if a suspension from school is indicated for most extreme cases, in line with local authority guide lines.
- When incidents of bullying are alleged, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Phase Leader will investigate the viewpoints of all involved- both victim and perpetrator. The viewpoints of independent witnesses will also be sort, when available
- All viewpoints will be recorded on CPOMS under the category of “Bullying”
- Parents will be informed of any bullying that is discovered by or to their child, so that school and families can work together to support the child involved
- Disciplinary action will be taken in the form of protective and/or educational consequences. Appropriate consequences will be decided upon in order to protect and educate those involved. Restorative conversations will be conducted, where they could be deemed helpful.
- The emotional impact on all pupils involved (victim, perpetrator or by-standers) will be considered and support given where needed. The conduct and well-being of both victim and perpetrator will be monitored after the event to ensure against reoccurrence.
- Details of incidents will be recorded and monitored by our DSP/ DDSP for safeguarding to identify any possible patterns of behaviour.
- Data regarding all incidents of bullying is collated by the school, shared with the Governing Body, and is published annually on our website. Monitoring of this data by the Headteacher forms a basis for any future actions or training within school and to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

Appendix A: Related Policies

Accessibility Plan

Accessibility planning is described in a separate action plan and is reviewed by the Governing Body annually

Special Educational Needs

Our policy on the identification of and provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs is to be found in the Special Educational Needs Policy.

Behaviour Policy

Our policy on promoting positive behaviour

Anti-bullying Policy

Indicates our practice to prevent bullying

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Our policies on Pay; Managing Medicines in School; Admissions (Hertfordshire County procedures); Exclusions; Equal Opportunities (employment practices and disciplinary procedures); Collective Worship and Attendance also reflect our belief in, and adherence to, the Equality Act 2010

We comply with legislation which protects our staff.