



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Rationale

This policy has been produced in line with the Equality Act 2010. This policy also reflects the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended), particularly the requirement to actively promote principles which encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. Discrimination on the basis of age (for adults), disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage or civil partnership (for adults) is unacceptable in this school. Every pupil and staff member will endeavour to further this objective by personally contributing towards a happy and caring environment and by sharing respect for, and appreciation of, each other as individuals. We recognise that the needs of individuals and groups of pupils are many and varied, and that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all, including those with a special educational need or those who may need support to learn English as an additional language. An equal opportunity philosophy will be practised by all staff. The school acknowledges the complexity of society and recognises that it would be failing the pupils if it did not prepare them for this. In accordance with Part 2 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the school actively promotes mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths, beliefs, backgrounds and protected characteristics. Through its curriculum, assemblies, behaviour expectations and wider school life, the school seeks to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions.
- In the way it provides education for pupils.
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Related Policies

The principles contained within this policy are reflected through the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection, Curriculum, Behaviour, Admissions and employment related procedures.

This policy should be read alongside the following:

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour policy
- English as Another Language (EAL) policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Safer Recruitment and Induction policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Aims of this policy

- Communicate the commitment of the school to the promotion of equal opportunities and ensure that staff and children understand that discrimination against any person on any grounds in the protected characteristics list is unacceptable.
- Ensure that the principles and practices of equal opportunities apply to all members of the school community.
- Create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination.
- Foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone feels valued and supported.
- Ensure that all pupils reach their full potential.
- Remove, or help to overcome barriers to pupils where they exist.
- Educate, develop and prepare children for life, whatever their sex, colour, culture, gender or ability.
- Provide an environment in which children and staff feel safe enough to express/question views.

Equality Commitment

The school is committed to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advancing equality of opportunity.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Ensuring that every member of the school community is treated with dignity, respect and fairness
- Monitor admissions, participation, attendance, behaviour and attainment patterns to identify and address any potential inequalities.
- Review prejudice-related incidents, bullying incidents and safeguarding concerns linked to protected characteristics to identify trends and inform future school improvement work.

Equality Objectives

The school will review equality information annually and set measurable equality objectives designed to promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination.

Current objectives are to:

- Monitor prejudice-related incidents and take appropriate action to reduce their occurrence.
- Promote diversity, equality and inclusion through curriculum planning, assemblies and enrichment opportunities.
- Monitor attendance, behaviour, participation and achievement data to identify and address potential inequalities.
- Provide ongoing equality, diversity and inclusion training for all staff.
- Strengthen pupils' understanding of protected characteristics, inclusion and respect through PSHE, RSHE and the wider curriculum.

Responsibilities

The school governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the information set out in this policy is published and communicated to

staff, pupils and parents, and that the policy is reviewed annually and sooner if there are significant legislative or regulatory changes.

- Reviewing and monitoring implementation of the School Accessibility Plan and ensuring reasonable adjustments are considered appropriately for disabled pupils, staff and visitors.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Providing updates on equalities legislation and the school's responsibilities under this.
- Reporting to the Governing Body on all prejudice-related incidents, including racist, faith-related, disability-related, sexist, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic incidents, together with any identified equality trends.
- Providing a curriculum that promotes equality throughout the school and monitoring its impact.
- Ensuring all school policies reflect a commitment to equality.
- Promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils.
- Monitoring success in achieving the objectives and reporting back to governors.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead

- Supporting the Headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils.
- Meeting with the responsible governor to discuss ongoing work on these objectives.

Members of staff are responsible for:

- Acting as positive role models in order to promote equality throughout the school community.
- Abiding by and adhering to this policy.
- Implementing this policy.
- Reporting and dealing with incidents of discrimination and unequal treatment.
- Helping to build an environment of mutual respect and tolerance.
- Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and good community relations.
- Challenging inappropriate language, behaviour, racial harassment and bullying.
- Having high expectations of all pupils.
- Participating in regular safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion training appropriate to their role.
- Participating in equality, diversity and inclusion training as part of staff induction and ongoing safeguarding and professional development programmes appropriate to their role.
- Reporting any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community.
- Planning and teaching that allows all learners to achieve to the best of their ability and supports the needs of all learners.

Admissions

The school does not discriminate in admissions on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010. However, in exceptional cases, difficulties highlighted during a child's initial assessment visit which could affect the learning of the whole class may necessitate discussions between the Headteacher, Class Teacher and

Parents/Carers prior to the offer of a child's place being endorsed.

The school will try hard to meet the individual needs of children with disabilities but can only do so if we are aware of them. Parents are requested to summarise access and support needs when enquiring for a place at the school. Registration will be considered on academic grounds first, as for any other applicant, to decide whether an offer of a place is appropriate.

We can then consider the particular needs of the child and invite them in for an informal information visit. This will give parents the chance to make an informed decision about the facilities the school is able to offer and what reasonable adjustments can be made can be made. We will try to ensure that disabled pupils can play as full a part as possible in school life and the reasonable adjustment duty will help support that.

These 'reasonable adjustments' should be identified and implemented before the child joins the school. All appropriate staff should be informed of the particular needs of the pupil and be aware that these needs may change during any one year. Some staff training may be needed.

The school has a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through Educational Health Care Plans or from other sources.

The number of people who are advised of the specific needs of the disabled pupil should be limited in order to maintain confidentiality.

Appropriate learning resources will be provided to ensure that all users are catered for in terms of access, facilities, services and support.

Enquiries should be made to outside agencies, to ensure that the maximum amount of support, both practical and financial, is being given to the pupil in order to aid their education and welfare.

Further details of ways in which the school aims to support pupils with a disability can be seen in the School Accessibility Plan.

The school will not discriminate against a prospective pupil because of a protected characteristic and will consider reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants in accordance with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Discrimination

All forms of discrimination by any person within the school are to be treated seriously. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school. Any graffiti should be removed immediately. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes. Parents should be aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities.

Forms of Discrimination

Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct Discrimination

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic as detailed. It also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. If the criteria cannot be objectively justified, they would be indirectly discriminatory.

Discrimination Arising from Disability

Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a person with a disability is treated

unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be the proportionate means of achieving an aim.

Harassment

Harassment has a specific legal definition under the Equality Act (2010) – it is ‘unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.’ This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic.

Harassment, discriminatory behaviour and prejudice-related conduct may occur both in person and online. The school will investigate incidents involving digital platforms, messaging services, social media, online gaming environments or other electronic communication systems where there is an impact on members of the school community.

Complaints Against Adults

If a complaint of discrimination/harassment is brought against a staff member, the Headteacher will investigate the allegation fully and notify the Chair of Governors. In the case of the Headteacher being named, the Chair of Governors will take on this responsibility. Staff who believe that they have experienced discrimination, harassment or victimisation may also raise concerns through the school's Grievance Procedure, Whistleblowing Procedure or other relevant employment policies.

Policy and Practice – How do we Embrace, Celebrate and Promote EDI?

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

Curriculum

At Ayscoughfee Hall School we aim to:

- Provide a stimulating, relevant and exciting curriculum that will motivate and enthuse all pupils.
- Use a variety of teaching methods to ensure effective learning takes place for all pupils.
- Provide challenge for all pupils.
- Promote equality and diversity through curriculum planning.
- Provide age-appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about the protected characteristics contained within the Equality Act 2010 and the importance of respect, inclusion and tolerance in modern British society.
- Ensure planning is differentiated in order to provide full access for all pupils and for each pupil to receive the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities.
- Carefully monitor all groups of pupils to ensure that they make progress and achieve their targets.
- Avoid stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials.
- Provide specialised or adapted resources for pupils with disabilities.
- Create a positive classroom ethos which is welcoming to all.
- Ensure pupils feel valued and have individual targets.
- Be open to the views of pupils.
- Celebrate a wide range of festivals.
- Encourage pupils to share their experiences of different cultures and different religions.
- Provide positive classroom displays of pupils' work.

Teaching and Learning Styles

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

- Ensure quality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds without stereotyping.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racial behaviour and provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their cultures.
- Seek to involve parents in supporting their child's education and care.
- Take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future care and learning – setting challenging targets.
- Make the best use of all available resources and assessments to support the care and learning of all groups of pupils.

Fostering Good Relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.
- Through whole school assemblies where we will address and deal with relevant issues, as well as recognising and celebrating different faiths and religions. Guest speakers will also be invited into school.
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.
- Ensuring pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of equality, diversity, inclusion and respect through the PSHE, RSHE and wider curriculum.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports club. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.
- Promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Pupils for Whom English is an Additional Language

The school views linguistic diversity positively and aims to be aware of the dialect and languages spoken by pupils and their families. Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language will receive support if necessary. Provision for these pupils is detailed in our SEND and EAL policy.

Gender Equality

The school recognises the protected characteristics of sex and gender reassignment under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to ensuring that all pupils and staff are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

The school continuously examines its curriculum, procedures and materials for gender bias or inequality.

All children have equal opportunity within, and equal access to, all areas of the curriculum.

All children are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities, both inside and outside the classroom.

Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of gender bias in both our teaching and learning materials and our teaching styles.

Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid sexual stereotypes and gender bias.

Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to boys and girls.

All children are encouraged to work and play freely with others of both sexes.

Teaching and other groupings, such as dinner queues, assembly seating, lines for dismissal and classroom seating are organised on the basis of criteria other than gender.

Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving/delegating responsibility and noting achievement.

Discipline procedures, such as rewards and sanctions, are the same for both sexes.

Religion

The school acknowledges that members of the school community come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith, whereas others are committed to a greater or lesser extent to a variety of religions. We seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.

Culture, Class and Race

Ayscoughfee Hall School acknowledges that members of the school come from diverse cultural and racial backgrounds, and we endeavour to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help promote a school and a society in which there is social, religious and racial harmony.

The school recognises the need to be different without being excluded.

We are happy for pupils to wear special forms of dress, where these are an essential part of their religious or cultural background. We value the history, experience and contribution of our multi-cultural community and seek to support this through the curriculum and life of our school.

We will not tolerate racist behaviour in any form. We aim to tackle racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations across all aspects of school life. We do this by:

- Creating an ethos in which pupils and staff feel valued and secure.
- Building self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, so that they can then use their qualities to influence their own relationships with others.
- Having consistent expectations of pupils, their care and learning.
- Removing or minimising barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve.
- Ensuring that our teaching/caring takes into account the needs of all pupils through our schemes of work and planning or learning and caring strategies.
- Regular consultation with parents/carers, so that they are well informed of our policy and procedures.
- Making clear to our pupils what constitutes aggressive and racist behaviour.

- Identifying clear procedures for dealing quickly with incidents of racist behaviour.
- Making pupils and staff confident about challenging racist and aggressive behaviour.

Dealing with Incidents of Discrimination, Inequality or Harassment

The school recognises that prejudice-related incidents may constitute a safeguarding concern. Such incidents will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and recorded appropriately on the school's safeguarding systems.

All cases of discrimination or prejudice will be taken seriously and dealt with, as appropriate, according to school policy. A record of incidents will be kept.

In the case of pupils displaying such behaviour/attitudes, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher should be informed, and consideration given to involving parents. When dealing with incidents of physical assault, verbal abuse and/or damage to pupils' property as a result of discrimination or harassment, the following procedures apply:

- Stop the incident and comfort the victim.
- Reprimand the perpetrator and inform the victim what action has been taken.
- If the incident is witnessed by other pupils, explain to them why it is unacceptable.
- Report the incident to the Headteacher, or Deputy Head in her absence.
- Inform the class teacher(s) or both victim and perpetrator and record on My Concern, giving a detailed account of the incident. Remember to use the child(ren)'s own words and do not ask leading questions.
- Inform both sets of parents (this may be done by the Class/Headteacher depending upon circumstances).

Procedures for Handling Prejudice-Related Incidents

All incidents involving prejudice, discrimination, harassment or bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and appropriately. This includes incidents relating to racism, faith or religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or any other protected characteristic. Incidents may include racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language or behaviour, faith-related discrimination, disability discrimination, or any other behaviour that causes or may cause a person to feel excluded, intimidated, humiliated or unsafe. This includes incidents occurring online, through social media, messaging applications, gaming platforms or other digital communications where there is an impact on members of the school community.

The following procedures will apply when dealing with incidents of prejudice-related behaviour:

- Stop the incident and ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil or person affected.
- Provide appropriate reassurance and support to the person affected.
- Challenge the behaviour and make clear that prejudice, discrimination, harassment and bullying are unacceptable.
- Report the incident to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher as soon as possible.
- Inform the relevant class teacher(s) and record the incident on My Concern, providing a detailed factual account. Staff should use the child(ren)'s own words wherever possible and should not ask leading questions.
- Inform parents/carers of the pupils involved where appropriate, depending on the circumstances of the incident.
- A 'Racist Incident Form' should be completed (Appendix 1).

- Consider appropriate action in line with the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.
- Monitor the situation following the incident to ensure that the person affected continues to feel safe and supported and that there is no recurrence.
- All prejudice-related incidents will be recorded and monitored so that the school can identify any patterns or recurring concerns and take appropriate action.
- Where appropriate, incidents will be reported to the Governing Body and used to inform staff training, curriculum planning and wider Equality, Diversity and Inclusion work.

Where an incident involves a member of staff, parent/carer, Governor or visitor, either as the person affected or as the alleged perpetrator, the incident will be reported to the Headteacher and, where appropriate, the Chair of Governors. Where the Headteacher is involved, the matter will be referred to the Chair of Governors.

The school will ensure that all prejudice-related incidents are treated consistently, regardless of whether they relate to race, faith, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or another protected characteristic

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and Governors will monitor equality, diversity and inclusion through:

- Analysis of prejudice-related incidents.
- Behaviour and bullying records.
- Safeguarding records where relevant.
- Curriculum review.
- Feedback from pupils, parents and staff.

Findings will be used to inform staff training, curriculum development and future equality objectives.

Employment of Staff

The school values diversity amongst the staff. In **all** staff appointments, the best candidate will be appointed based upon strict professional criteria. We accept applications from, and recruit staff irrespective of their Protected Characteristics and will not discriminate on these grounds. Every application will be treated in a fair, open-minded way. Further details can be found in the school Safer Recruitment policy. We will afford all staff equal access to all benefits, services, facilities and opportunities for development irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare.

Applicants and Visitors with a Disability

All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate people with a disability. These are further detailed in the School Accessibility Plan. A plan of the school building is available showing wheelchair access points and disabled toilet area. Access to the upper floors of the main building is not possible for wheelchair users but every effort would be made to ensure access to equivalent resources on the ground floor.

This policy has been updated and will be used in draft form pending formal ratification by the Board of Governors.

Any reference to the word 'school' implicitly includes all its associated clubs/activities including Kids Club. This policy also applies to EYFS

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