

# Equality Information and Objectives Policy

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## Introductory notes

When the Equality Act 2010 was introduced fully in April 2011 there was no longer a statutory requirement that schools should draw up and publish equality schemes or policies. However, under the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty, all schools and academies are required to publish equalities information and to produce objectives on how they will enhance provision to ensure equality for all. These to be reviewed at least once every four years. It is therefore highly advisable for schools and academies to set out their equalities principles.

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## Legal framework

1. STAR MAT welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. 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.

## Guiding principles

4. In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.**

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- Whatever their age
- 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
- whatever their sexual identity.

### **Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.**

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and

background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- age
- disability; so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity; so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognized
- gender
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity.

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

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between persons of different gender and an absence of sexual, homophobic and ageist harassment

**Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development**

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

**Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- people of different gender
- younger and older people

- people with differing sexual identities

### **Principle 6: We consult and involve widely**

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- persons of different ages
- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- people of all genders.
- Persons of different sexual orientation.

### **Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit**

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- Older as well as younger people
- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- people of different gender
- persons with different sexual identities.

### **Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence**

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- age
- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender
- sexual identity.

### **Principle 9: Objectives**

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in, which we have been involved (principle 7), in relation to:

- age
- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture

- gender
  - sexual identity
5. We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.
  6. Every three years, accordingly, we draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan and processes of self-evaluation, setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.
  7. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

### **The curriculum**

8. We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles set out in paragraph 4 above.

### **Ethos and organisation**

9. We ensure the principles listed in paragraph 4 above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:
  - pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
  - pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
  - teaching styles and strategies
  - admissions and attendance
  - staff recruitment, retention and professional development
  - care, guidance and support
  - behaviour, discipline and exclusions
  - working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
  - working with the wider community.

### **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying**

10. The Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1-3:
  - prejudices around disability and special educational needs
  - prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
  - prejudices reflecting sexism, ageism, homophobia, bi-phobia and trans-phobia (or any other form of gender discrimination) .
11. There is guidance in staff handbooks on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

12. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

13. Our Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) are responsible for ensuring that the schools in STAR MAT comply with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

14. A member of the LGB has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Named Governor: Ian Butler

15. The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

16. A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

Named SLT member: Alison Woodward

17. All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

### **Information and resources**

18. We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

19. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

### **Religious observance**

20. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

### **Staff development and training**

21. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

### **Breaches of the policy**

22. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

23. We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.
24. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broke down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

## Features of the model

1. The model contains the following features.
    - The term ethnicity is used in preference to race or racial group, on the grounds that it better reflects the intentions and concerns of race relations legislation.
    - There are references where appropriate to religious affiliation and identity.
    - There are references where appropriate to sexual identity and to challenging homophobia.
    - The duty to promote community cohesion is integrated into the policy particularly but not only in the third of the seven principles.
    - Disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexuality are referred to in alphabetical order, not in the order in which legislation requiring equality schemes and policies was introduced.
    - The phrasing at certain points reflects the specific duties required by the Equality Act 2010, particular the duties to publish information (principle 8), to engage with interested groups and individuals (principle 6), and to formulate and publish objectives (principle 9).
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# Statement on Equality

Riverside school always interacts with others with an attitude of deep respect. This respect is based on the essential human dignity of each person. There is no room in Riverside School for hatred, injustice, or a lack of charity or compassion. It is also true that all people have an inherent dignity and fundamental freedom that must be respected.

## THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil (subject to certain exceptions including those applying to schools with a religious character):

- In relation to admissions; [L] [SEP]
- In the way it provides education for pupils; [L] [SEP]
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service; or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. [L] [SEP]

## Protected characteristics

It is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably on the basis of the following protected characteristics:

- Age;
- Sex; [L] [SEP]
- Race; [L] [SEP]
- Disability; [L] [SEP]
- Religion or belief; [L] [SEP]
- Sexual orientation; [L] [SEP]
- Gender reassignment- this protection was introduced by the Act; [L] [SEP]
- Pregnancy or maternity – the Act extended this protection to pupils. [L] [SEP]

it is also unlawful to discriminate on the basis of association or perception i.e. because a person with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated has a protected characteristic, or if you think a person has a protected characteristic even if this is mistaken. [L] [SEP]

## Therefore, at Riverside School, central to all aspects of school life are the following values:

We believe we are very fortunate to live in a society rich in different cultures, ethnic backgrounds, skin colours and religions. The school aims to promote positive attitudes to gender equality, cultural diversity and special needs of all kinds. We aim to educate, develop and prepare all our children for life. Prejudice and discrimination on the basis of colour, culture, origin, gender or ability is unacceptable. The school is committed to working towards equality of access, provision and treatment for all staff and pupils, regardless of race, culture, language, nationality, religion and other differences. We acknowledge the complexity of British society and recognise that it would be failing the children if it did not prepare them for their integral part in it. We aim to help our children make the most effective use of their talents, both for the benefit of others and to achieve self-fulfilment.

We believe and encourage therefore that each member of our school community;



- Feel happy and secure
- Feel able to work to their fullest capacity
- Feel respected as an individual who contributes positively to school life

And this applies to everyone.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

At Riverside School we....

- Take pride in our school and our achievements together
- Respect others and their beliefs
- Care for the world; near and far
- Make 'learning' an exciting, fun activity for life
- Listen to, and care for each other

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To encourage the development of a community in which there is a sharing of values and interests underpinned by an explicit ethos which is seen to promote the development of a secure environment: an environment in which all children and adults feel happy and valued, where personal endeavour is encouraged and the pursuit of high standards fostered. Every opportunity should be sought to enable all children to develop to their full potential and sustain a love of learning throughout their lives.

Furthermore, Riverside School seeks to meet the challenge presented to education by children, parents and society: a challenge to successfully fulfil the school's part in helping all the children in its care to grow up to become competent, confident, rational and self-reliant adults who can manage their own lives, play their part in society and feel valued contributors.

# Equality Information Policy Objectives

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## ***Equality Objectives***

1. Pupils develop a greater awareness of British values:
  - a. Democracy
  - b. The rule of law
  - c. Individual liberty
  - d. Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
2. Pupils develop an awareness of issues pertaining protected characteristics
3. Pupil Premium: To diminish the difference between disadvantaged pupils and their peers so that they achieve at least in line with national averages.
4. SEND-to ensure each individual pupil achieves their best possible outcome given their individual starting points.
5. Ensure planned residential trips and activities are appropriately inclusive and offer equality of access and experience.
6. To continue to improve access for children and adults with physical and SEN disabilities through:
  - a. Ensure that the Hygiene Suite is maintained and appropriately resourced for engaging children while they are using this facility.
  - b. Forwards plan appropriately for child's path through school.
  - c. Staff training Evacuation and PEEP
  - d. Staff training on specific medical and physical needs conditions
  - e. To review use of Teaching Assistants to cater for increased SEN and physical disability needs
  - f. Engage with NYCC SEND structures as they evolve, including consideration of SEND outreach.
  - g. Ensure parental access is in place including accessible car parking spaces.
  - h. Walkie talkie/Communication system in the event of an emergency is in place and reviewed regularly.

## Action Plan

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### Statement of intent

This plan should be read in conjunction with the School Improvement Plan and outlines the proposals of the governing body of Riverside School to increase access to education for pupils with disabilities in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Equality Act 2010.

A person is regarded as having a disability under the Act where the person has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This plan aims to:

- Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can take advantage of education, benefits, facilities and associated services provided.
- Improve the availability of accessible information, which is readily available to other pupils, to pupils with disabilities.

The above aims will be delivered within a reasonable timeframe, and in ways which are determined after taking into account the pupil's disabilities and the views of the parents/carers and pupil. In the preparation of an accessibility strategy, the LA/MAT must have regard to the need to allocate adequate resources in the implementation of the strategy.

The governing body also recognises its responsibilities towards employees with disabilities and will:

- Monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities.
- Provide appropriate support and provision for employees with disabilities to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers.
- Undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace.

The plan will be resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised regularly in consultation with:

- The parents/carers of pupils
- The headteacher and other relevant members of staff
- Governors
- External partners

This plan is reviewed annually to take into account the changing needs of the schools and its pupils, and where the school has undergone a refurbishment.

## Planning duty 1: Physical environment

Governing bodies should undertake an audit of the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access the curriculum on an equal basis with their peers. Short, medium and long term action should then be identified to address specific gaps and improve access. All procedures will be carried out in a reasonable time, and after taking into account pupils' disabilities and the preferences of the pupils themselves or their parents/carers.

	Issue	What	Who	When	Outcome	Review
<b>Short term</b>	Ensure staff are appropriately trained for defined pupil need	Audit of pupil need vs technology and working spaces	Inclusion manager	ongoing	Staff trained in moving and handling, risk assessments and care plans in place	
<b>Medium term</b>	Pro-active work to assess environment for pupils as they move through school	TBC – possible choice of classroom locations; adjustment of screens, furnishings, door thresholds, PPE plans	Inclusion Manager	June/July 2019	Clear access plan in place for any named pupils	
<b>Long term</b>	Children with physical disabilities cannot access portacabins and early years	Construction work undertaken	School business manager/building contractors	Unknown	TCUs to be re-built as an extension to school with fully accessible entrances and additional accessible toilet  Ramped access or alternate to EYFS	

## Planning duty 2: Curriculum

Governing bodies should undertake an audit of the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access the physical environment on an equal basis with their peers. Short, medium and long term action should then be identified to address specific gaps and improve access. All procedures will be carried out in a reasonable time, and after taking into account pupils' disabilities and the preferences of the pupils

	Issue	What	Who	When	Outcome criteria	Review
Short term	Staff members do not know whether the curriculum is accessible	Audit of curriculum	Headteacher/HoS/teachers/	Spring 2019	Management and teaching staff are aware of the accessibility gaps in the curriculum	
	Enhance staff skills to support pupils with SEND	Ensure all staff team are aware of need and appropriate adjustments INSET provided to specific staff members on particular need	Headteacher/ External links to specialist provision Inclusion Manager Educational Psychologist	Ongoing	Staff members have the skills to support children with SEND	
Medium term	Pupils with SEND cannot access lessons in particular residential provision	Detail appropriate adjustments within lessons such as assistive technology Pre-plan residentials at least 2 years in advance to make appropriate adjustments/re-arrange	Inclusion Manager/class teachers	Ongoing	Pupils with SEND can access lessons and residentials	
Long term	Ensure equality of opportunity and challenge to prejudice is coherently planned within the curriculum	Curriculum planning in place	All staff		Pupil voice, stakeholder voice etc demonstrate coherent and impacting provision	

## Planning duty 3: Information

Governing bodies should undertake an audit of the extent to which pupils with disabilities can access information on an equal basis with their peers. Short, medium and long term action should then be identified to address specific gaps and improve access. All procedures will be carried out in a reasonable time, and after taking into account pupils' disabilities and the preferences of themselves or their

	Issue	What	Who	When	Outcome criteria	Review
Short term	Management staff do not know whether school information is accessible or not	Audit of information delivery procedures including through website, alternative languages etc	SICT/Inclusion Manager/HT	Spring 2019	School is aware of accessibility gaps to its information delivery procedures	
	School acts on advice to make written information accessible	Following above audit – implementation to include message to newsletter etc Adjustments as appropriate to non-written communications eg choice of seating for hearing/visually impaired etc	Inclusion Manager/HT	Spring 2019	Alternative formats etc in place	
Medium term	Ensure communications meet need of parents and students	Ongoing check and implement according to need – hearing impairment, translation support etc	Inclusion Manager	Each autumn	Parents and students can access all school comms	
Long term	Ensure school communications are suitable for purpose	Review of provision vs technology change	SLT/govs	Autumn 2020		