



Policy Statements and Procedures

EQUALITY POLICY

Introduction

This Equality Policy is based on the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, which replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act and was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). The Equality Act 2010 put in place a number of duties for public bodies, including schools, to ensure that they have due regard to certain 'protected' groups. The protected groups are age, gender reassignment, disability, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation and pregnancy or maternity.

The general duty is set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In summary, all public bodies must pay due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Schools have a legal requirement to prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives which will help them to further the three aims of the Equality Duty.

The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents, guardians and carers receiving services from the School, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Please note that parents, guardians and carers are referred to as 'parents', and colleges and schools within The Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust are referred to as the 'School' throughout this policy.

Policy objectives

This policy aims to:

- Value all members of the school community, regardless of race, sex, religious belief, etc.
- Provide equal access and opportunity for all pupils to benefit from the school's educational programme and participation in extra-curricular activities
- Promote understanding of the principles and practices of equality and justice, and commitment to them

- Counteract negative influences, conditioning or stereotyping of any kind which underpin prejudicial discrimination

Principals

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

Teaching and learning

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

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils 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 pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

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 policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

The Trust is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

The Trust, as employer will seek to eliminate discrimination and harassment, should it exist in the daily routines of employment practice, actively promoting equality across all groups within the workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff 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.

Equality and the law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Disability Equality Duty (2005), Equality Act (2006) and the Equality Act (2010).

Public Sector Equality Duty

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably on the basis of a 'protected characteristic.'

The protected characteristics are:

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment, and in regard to the provision for goods and services. It does not however apply to pupils, and so the school is free to arrange pupils in classes based on their age group with materials appropriate to them.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty which applies to public bodies, school including both LA maintained and Academies. The school must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality and opportunity between people who share a prohibited characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Paying due regard in this context means that when significant decisions are being taken, thought must be given to the equality implications.

Race Equality

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 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'. 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 Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on the School, requiring it to pay due regard to 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 the specific duty, the School and the wider Trust will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying disability equality goals and actions;
- Review and revise the scheme as appropriate.

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 pupils 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;
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under the specific duty, the School and the wider Trust will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying gender equality goals and actions;
- Review and revise the scheme as appropriate.

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 pupils and treatment of pupils.

Community cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths/ beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

Consultation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils, parents, guardians and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from parents;
- Input from staff surveys, staff meetings, etc;
- Feedback from the School Council, lessons, surveys on pupil's attitudes to self and school (PASS);
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- Feedback at Local Advisory Body meetings.

Procedure

Tackling discrimination

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

Members of 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 pupil's individual circumstances.

Staff and governors should be aware of both direct and indirect discrimination and understand the differences.

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to the Principal where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Principal and racist incidents are reported to the LAB and Trust on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as 'unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person'.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably, than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ('a prohibited act') in connection with the Act e.g. Making an allegation of discrimination.

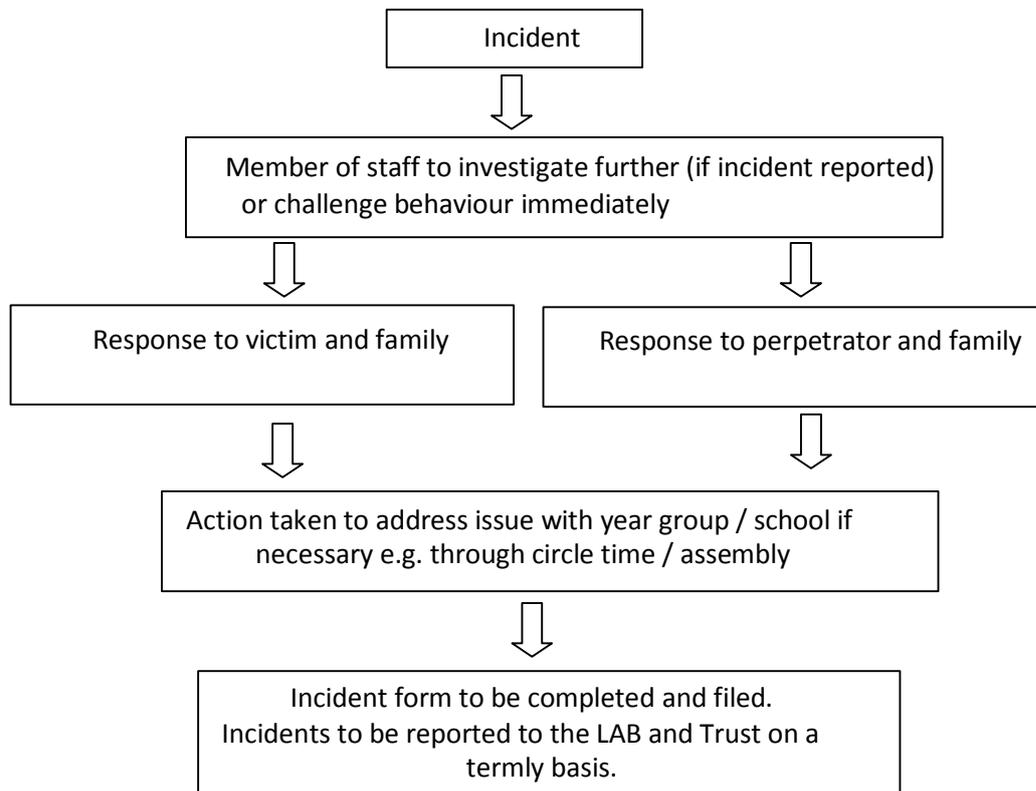
Types of discriminatory incident

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 pupils and staff how to report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.



Monitoring and review

The success of the Equality Plan is evaluated through self-evaluation and reporting activities such as:

- Monitoring of assessments of pupils' learning by the Senior Management Team (SLT) and other members of staff.
- The Raising of Achievement Strategic Plan (RASP) for Behaviour and Safety, which includes actions to tackle discrimination.
- Visits from Local Authority personnel and Ofsted inspection arrangements.
- Feedback from parents, guardians and carers and staff, both formal and informal, following Parent Consultations meetings.
- Item agenda at termly Local Advisory Board (LAB) meetings.

Roles and responsibilities

The role of the Local Advisory (Governing) Body (LAB)

- The LAB is committed to equal opportunities and will continue to do all it can to ensure that the School is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on the protected characteristics;
- The Trust and LAB seek to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs on grounds of the protected characteristics;
- The Trust and LAB 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 and pupils.
- The Trust and LAB welcome all applications to join the School, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability;
- The LAB ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst at School on account of race, sex or disability, gender, religion or any other differences or circumstances.

The role of the Principal

- The Principal will implement the policy, supported by the LAB in so doing;
- The Principal will ensure that all staff are aware of the policy, applying these guidelines fairly in all situations;
- The Principal will ensure that all due regard is paid to this policy in terms of employment or training opportunities;
- The Principal will promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, promoting respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life;
- The Principal will treat all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the policy and objectives;
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images;
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Principal;
- Teachers will support the work of ancillary and associate staff, encouraging them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

Links with other policies

This Policy links with:

- Behaviour for Learning
- Child Protection
- ALN/SEN
- Home – School Agreement

Appendix

Check list

- Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training? Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides?
- How has your Equality Plan been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents and pupils?
- Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?
- Are all pupils encouraged to participate in school life? Are pupils who make a positive contribution reflective of the school's diversity e.g. through class assemblies / school council?
- Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other pupils? Are racist incidents reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis?
- Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of your school community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?
- Does the school take part in annual events such as Black History Month, Deaf Awareness Week and One World Week to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the school, and are issues such as language barriers considered?
- Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?
- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?