



# **Equality Policy & Objectives**

## Equality Policy & Objectives

### 1 Statement of Policy

- 1.1 Oakfield School is committed to creating an environment which will promote equality of opportunity for all members of its community, including pupils, staff, parents/carers and others working in partnership.
- 1.2 The school recognises that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups, however, we will strive 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. The school, therefore, cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

### 2 Legislation & Guidance

- 2.1 This policy will set out how the school will meet the requirements under the following legislation:
  - [The Equality Act 2010](#), introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination.
  - [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives.
- 2.2 This policy is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).
- 2.3 To ensure that our equality information and objectives are easily accessible, we will:
  - publish our Equality Policy & Objectives on the school website.
  - raise awareness of equality through the school newsletter, Hub/Tutor times, staff meetings and other communications.

### 3 Aims

- 3.1 Oakfield School aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

3.2 The Equality Act 2010 states that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

3.3 As a public body, the school will fulfil its duty to:

- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually.
- Set and publish equality objectives, at least every 4 years.
- All information will be published in a way which makes it easy for all stakeholders to access and understand including making reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of stakeholders within a protected characteristic.

## 4 Protected Characteristics

4.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following 8 protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

4.2 The school will ensure that these are considered in terms of the impact of these policies, practice and development, to ensure that discrimination against them is eliminated and good relations and equality of opportunity between people of these protected characteristics and no characteristic are fostered and developed.

- 4.3 The school will continue to organise pupils in groups according to age under the exemption to schools regarding age as a protected characteristic including where pupils are above the age of eighteen as outlined in DfE, Equality Act 2010 and Schools.

## **5 Roles & Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The Governing Body is responsible for:

- ensuring that the equality information and objectives as set out in this policy are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils, and parents/carers.
- ensuring that the published equality information is updated at least every year and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years; and
- delegating responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives daily to the Headteacher.

- 5.2 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils; and
- monitoring success in achieving the objectives and reporting back to the Governing Body.

- 5.3 The designated member of staff for equality is responsible for:

- supporting the Headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff, pupils, and parents/carers; and
- supporting the Headteacher in identifying any staff training needs and delivering training, as necessary.

- 5.4 The school and residential staff are responsible for:

- eliminating discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- fostering good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- 5.5 Visitors and contractors are responsible for following this policy and other relevant policies.

## **6 Eliminating Discrimination**

- 6.1 Oakfield School is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.
- 6.2 Where relevant, our policies include a reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.
- 6.3 Staff and the Governing Body are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act – for example, during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.
- 6.4 Staff joining the school will receive training on the Equality Act 2010 as part of their induction programme, and all staff will receive refresher training throughout each academic year alongside Safeguarding updates.
- 6.5 The National College online provides Certificate in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion training.
- 6.6 The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues. This member of staff regularly liaises regarding any issues and makes the SLT and the Headteacher aware of these as appropriate.
- 6.7 The school is aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children from being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- 6.8 The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion, or training opportunities.
- 6.9 The school actively promotes equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- 6.10 The school's admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, or maternity.

## **7 Advancing Equality of Opportunity**

- 7.1 As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying).
- taking steps to meet the needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times); and
- encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies).

7.2 In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing.
- analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information.
- make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying); and
- publish further data about any issues associated with protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our pupils.

## 8 Fostering Good Relations

8.1 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 various aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, Citizenship and 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.
- holding Hub/Tutor sessions dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such Hub/Tutor sessions, and we will also invite external professionals to contribute, i.e. the Police or Fire Service, if necessary.
- collaborating with our local community. This includes inviting professionals to speak at Hub/Tutor sessions or 1-2-1 sessions and organising school trips and activities based on the local community.
- encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between diverse 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. Staff will encourage pupils to participate in the school's activities, such as break/lunch clubs. We also collaborate with parents/carers to promote knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures.

- we have developed links with professionals and agencies who have specialist knowledge about characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

## 9 Equality Considerations in Decision-Making

- 9.1 The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.
- 9.2 The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:
- is accessible to pupils with disabilities; and
  - has equivalent facilities for males and females.

## 10 Addressing Prejudice and Prejudice-based Bullying

- 10.1 The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality
- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs.
  - Prejudices around race, religion, or beliefs.
  - Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation.
- 10.2 Staff are made aware of how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded, and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

## 11 Equality Objectives

- 11.1 **Objective 1:** To be inclusive providing equal opportunities for all pupils to access the curriculum with no barriers to learning.
- 11.2 **Objective 2:** To educate all pupils whatever their beliefs, race, or religion for life in a diverse society and to treat everyone with respect.
- 11.3 **Objective 3:** For everyone to examine their prejudices to prevent any form of unconscious discrimination.
- 11.4 **Objective 4:** To foster good relations between groups through the inclusion of equality, diversity, and inclusion within the curriculum, including Hub/Tutor sessions and PSHE lessons.

11.5 **Objective 5:** To increase staff and pupil knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity issues.

11.6 **Objective 6:** Work with professionals and outside agencies to deliver more effective and equal outcomes for staff and pupils.

## **12 Behaviour, Suspensions and Attendance**

12.1 The school's policies and procedures on pupil Behaviour, Discipline & Anti-Bullying and Attendance take full account of the new duties under the Equality Act.

12.2 The school will make reasonable, appropriate, and flexible adjustments for pupils with a disability.

12.3 The school closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of overrepresentation of different groups and acts promptly to address concerns.

## **13 Complaints**

13.1 Complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure.

## **14 Monitoring & Review**

14.1 This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and the Governing Body at least every 4 years (or earlier should guidance and legislation change).

14.2 The Governing Body will approve this policy.

## **15 Other Policies**

12.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour & Discipline Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Emotional Wellbeing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- PSE, Sex & Relations Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy