

Holme Grange School

Whole School Policy Including EYFS



Equal Opportunities and Valuing Diversity Policy

Date:	Amendment:	Reviewed by:
August 2023	Next review date	
August 2022	Reviewed	Darren Gosling
February 2021	Reviewed	Darren Gosling
June 2020	Revised	Matthew Jelley
December 2019	Review	Darren Gosling
December 2018	Review	Brandon Ashton
December 2017	Review	Claire Robinson

This Policy document applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS - Little Grange and Reception Classes).

This Policy applies to: employees; job applicants; individuals such as agency staff, consultants and volunteers who are not employees but who work at the School; and to pupils. It does not form part of employees' contracts of employment and may be amended by the School from time to time

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It now provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all discriminations that are unlawful.

The Equality Act 2010 established nine 'protected characteristics';

- Age
- Disability
- Gender (Sex)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Appendix A provides further information and definitions of discrimination, victimisation and harassment. Complaints relating to these matters must be dealt with promptly and investigated using the appropriate procedure, e.g. disciplinary procedure, grievance policy and complaints procedure.

Equal Opportunities - Statement of Commitment

The governing body and Holme Grange School is committed to a policy of equality. We aim to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of age, disability, gender (sex), gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual's self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated. We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated.

We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community. Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school's ethos and values, in particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy.

All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's equal opportunities policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

Aims and objectives

The governing body and school, through this Equal Opportunities Policy, aims to:

- carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation (*including The Equality Act*);
- reinforce the school's position as a provider of high quality education and as a good employer providing development opportunities;
- establish good people management practice and to set out an agenda in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organisational response;
- ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil;
- ensure that pupils and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals;
- ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's equal opportunities policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (e.g. complaints relating to staff may be investigated under the disciplinary or grievance procedure as appropriate). All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable.

Policy and planning

Equal opportunities implications, including race equality, will be considered whenever school policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide a comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation.

Employment matters

- **Appointments:** in all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on professional criteria.
- **Family-friendly policies:** the governing body/school is a family-friendly employer and will do its best to respond to the changing needs of all staff by publicising existing schemes designed to support employees in combining work and other responsibilities (parental leave arrangements, job share opportunities, carers' leave provision etc..).
- **HIV/AIDS:** the governing body and Holme Grange School recognises that people with HIV/AIDS suffer not only from the purely medical effects of the infection but may also experience prejudice and misunderstanding leading to unfair discrimination and victimisation. The governors and Holme Grange School therefore will ensure that people with HIV/AIDS do not experience unfair treatment in relation to employment, as pupils or as other members of the school community. The school and governing body will follow the detailed guidelines regarding staff recruitment and pupil admissions set out in Appendix B.
- **Trans employees:** *The Equality Act* now expressly covers discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment.

Training and development

The success of the Equal Opportunities Policy is closely linked to the provision of relevant training.

The school will endeavour to:

- enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status;

- provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, on the basis of their assessed training needs;
- promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, governors, parents/guardians and pupils can make;
- equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions, discriminatory practices and behaviour and to promote anti-discriminatory behaviour generally.

Professional development involves a continuous process of learning involving self-development, encouragement and motivation. The school places great importance on the relationship between team leaders and their teams and will ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own learning and development in the context of the school's performance management system.

Pupils

The curriculum

The school follows admission policies that do not permit sex, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission. The school's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnic origin.

The Education Reform Act 1988 stated that 'the school curriculum should reflect the culturally diverse society to which pupils belong and of which they will become adult members.' Pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which avoids stereotypes and provides good role models for all pupils. Equality of opportunity should inform the whole of the curriculum and be reviewed regularly.

Equal opportunities issues will be taken account of in planning the curriculum. This is reflected in curriculum planning documentation. The current Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils is enclosed at Appendix C.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring in respect to employment begins involves an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form, which comprises part of the recruitment pack of information which is issued to all potential job applicants.

Monitoring in respect of pupils begins with their data, as declared on their Application Form for a place at the school. This data is reviewed annually and reported to Department for Education as part of its annual School Census.

A review of equality and diversity in pupil education will be considered annually by the governors' Education Committee, taking account of aspects of pupils' pastoral welfare and curriculum opportunities and achievements. The number of international pupils is also reported to each meeting of the Governing Body.

Compliance with Section 10 of the Equality Act 2010 is set out in the school's policy document 'Accessibility Strategy to increase access for disabled students' , which includes the latest 3 year plans.

Governors will ensure that this policy is reviewed regularly.

Internal management issues

This policy is primarily designed to address pupil admissions, curriculum and employment aspects of governance and management. However, in reviewing and developing it further, the Governors, Headteacher and members of the Senior Management Team will take a

range of other internal issues into account. Many of those issues will already be the subject of detailed agreed policies. All such existing policies, therefore, will also be 'audited' from an equal opportunities perspective.

Appendix A: Discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation is illegal. However, for the school community, discrimination is also unacceptable on any of the other grounds referred to in this policy statement.

Failure to comply with the policy will be fully and promptly investigated using the appropriate procedures.

There are four ways in which discrimination may occur:

1. **Direct discrimination:** This means treating someone less favourably than others would be treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex etc
2. **Indirect discrimination:** This means applying a requirement or condition which cannot be justified to all groups but which has a disproportionately adverse effect on one group because the proportion of that group which can comply is smaller than the proportion of the group(s) which can comply with it.
3. **Victimisation:** This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than other persons would be treated because that person has done a 'protected act' under the Equality Act, for example, by bringing forward proceedings or giving evidence or information.
4. **Harassment:** Harassment can take many forms, from the most obvious abusive remarks to extremely subtle use of power. As with unfair or unlawful discrimination, harassment can be intentional or unintentional. However, the key issue is not simply the intention of the offender but the impact of the behaviour on the person receiving it.

Harassment may involve any of the following:

- physical contact or violence;
- offensive humiliating and intimidating remarks or actions;
- exclusion from participation in job-related or classroom-related discussions, training or social or other events;
- unfair work allocation;
- unjust or excessive or humiliating criticism of performance;
- offensive signs or notices;
- graffiti;
- repeated demands or requests for sexual favours.

These are merely examples and not an exhaustive list. Whatever the form, the school will provide support for any member of the school community, pupil or staff member who feels threatened or isolated because of such actions.

Appendix B: HIV/AIDS guidelines

The governors and Holme Grange School will:

- ensure that job applicants who are deemed to be medically fit to perform the job for which they have applied, are not denied an offer of work solely because they are HIV positive. In arriving at the decision, the school's normal recruitment criteria will be observed including the normal medical procedures;
- ensure, where possible, that resources are available to support employees or pupils with AIDS or other major health problems associated with HIV infection. The school's normal rules and procedures regarding counselling and ill health will apply in such cases;
- give positive consideration to applications for unpaid leave for those with responsibility for caring for people with AIDS-related conditions in accordance with carers' leave arrangements;
- treat any breaches of confidentiality as a serious matter to be dealt with in accordance with the normal disciplinary (or other appropriate) procedure;
- provide appropriate information in relation to AIDS in order to combat fears and prejudice and to enable the school community as a whole to function without risk to health.

Appendix C: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY FOR PUPILS

Introduction

Holme Grange School is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity ('protected characteristics'). And to promoting understanding of the principles and practices of equality and justice. Our aim is to equip pupils with an awareness of our diverse society and to appreciate the value of difference. This will be achieved by adherence to the principle that discrimination on the basis of any protected characteristic is not acceptable.

The primary objective of this school will be to educate, develop and prepare all our pupils for life, regardless of protected characteristics.

Pupils and teachers will further these principles by contributing towards a happy and caring environment and by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals.

The Aims and Values which underpin this policy are:

- To offer sound learning within the Christian tradition;
- To provide an attractive, stimulating environment where each child endeavours to achieve the highest standards;
- To accommodate dietary requirements on the basis of religion or culture. an environment for growth in spiritual, moral, social and cultural strengths;
- The development of an enquiring mind, self-respect and self-motivation, combined with appreciation of the attitudes, viewpoints and beliefs of others, leading to mutual understanding and respect for each other's differences and strengths.

We believe that with these aims a child will develop a willingness and desire to learn, work and enjoy school life. We also believe that achievement of our aims depends on a successful partnership between parents, children and teachers, all sharing in a common desire for learning.

All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.

Equality of opportunity permeates the whole curriculum and will be reviewed regularly.

Parents should be aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities.

- The school's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of protective characteristics.
- Equality of opportunity permeates the whole curriculum and will be reviewed regularly.

All members of the School community are expected to comply with this policy.

All parents are expected to support the aims of this policy and the School's ethos of tolerance and respect.

Admission

The School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School's Admissions Policy. The School accepts applications from, and admits, all prospective pupils irrespective of their gender, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief)] or special educational needs ('SEN').

Parents must inform the School when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and/or ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School. The School will not offer a place to a child with disabilities if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School cannot adequately cater for or meet their needs.

Educational Services

The School affords all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). The School will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The School will:

- Treat all members of the School community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination
- Endeavour to meet the needs of all children and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics
- Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with an Education Health Care Plan receive necessary educational and welfare support
- Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds
- Challenge inappropriate discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff
- Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum and a full range of extra-curricular activities
- Work with parents and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination in School
- Ensure that it reviews, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices
- Use the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE to:
 - o Promote tolerance of and respect for each other, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
 - o Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.

The School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all its forms is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies.

Religious Belief

Although the School's religious ethos is based on Christian values and tradition, the School is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or with no religion or faith) subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of the School community.

The governing body, through the senior leadership team, actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

School Uniform

All pupils are required to wear a uniform. The Head will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the School's policy on health and safety and it is reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Reasonable Adjustments for Pupils with Disability

The School has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils.

Where the School is required to consider its reasonable adjustments duty, it will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, the School is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage. The School will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the School. Further information on the School's reasonable adjustments duty can be found in the School's SEN and Disability Policy.

The School has an Accessibility Plan in place which can be found on the School website and a hard copy can be made available upon request. This sets out the School's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Monitoring and Review

The Head regularly monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy and reports to the governors on the policy's effectiveness in practice.

Breach of this Policy

Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.

Appendix D:

Equal Opportunities for Employees

This Policy applies to: employees; job applicants; individuals such as agency staff, consultants and volunteers who are not employees but who work at the School; and to pupils. It does not form part of employees' contracts of employment and may be amended by the School from time to time.

Holme Grange School is an equal opportunities employer and values diversity in the school community and workplace. No person will receive unfair or unlawful treatment on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, or because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic, or because they are associated with someone with a Protected Characteristic. Protected Characteristics are defined in the Equality Act, and listed in point 4 below.

We are committed to providing equal opportunities throughout employment, including in the recruitment, training and promotion of employees, and to eliminating discrimination in the workplace whether on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic. The Protected Characteristics as defined in the Equality Act are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender (Sex)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

All job applicants and employees will be treated with respect, and diversity is valued. It is the School's policy to give full and fair consideration to all applications for employment and to provide appropriate training, development and promotion prospects to all staff.

The School is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in respect of all areas including the following:

- 1.1 Career development.
- 1.2 Opportunities for training.
- 1.3 Appointments and allocation of responsibilities for all employees.
- 1.4 Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- 1.5 Termination of employment including redundancies
- 1.6 Conduct at work
- 1.7 Respectful and non-discriminatory behaviour by all staff.

The School aims to ensure that staff achieve their full potential and that all employment decisions are taken without reference to irrelevant or discriminatory criteria. The School also aims to encourage good practice in the field of equality of opportunity for pupils so that all pupils at the School are able to develop fully as individuals. This Equal Opportunities and Valuing Diversity Policy has been adopted as a means of helping to achieve these aims.

Staff at Holme Grange are expected to set an example and promote equality of opportunity for all girls and staff, both current and prospective, and to support an environment that values diversity.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees have a responsibility to ensure that the School's Equal Opportunities and Valuing Diversity Policy is properly observed and fully complied with. Breaches of the Equal Opportunities and Valuing Diversity Policy, and any act of discrimination or harassment by an employee, are viewed very seriously by the School and, in appropriate cases, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including the employee's summary dismissal.

Any individual who believes that they may have been disadvantaged on discriminatory grounds is entitled to raise the matter through the School's Grievance Procedure.

IMPLEMENTATION

Recruitment and employment decisions will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria. The School will endeavour to ensure that job vacancies are normally widely advertised and/or publicised so that the broadest range of candidates can apply. The School's selection procedures will be reviewed from time to time to ensure they are appropriate for achieving the School's objectives and for avoiding unlawful discrimination.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of its Equal Opportunities and Valuing Diversity Policy, the School monitors the composition of its workforce. Information given by staff and job applicants is treated in the strictest confidence, and is used solely for monitoring purposes.

Equal consideration will be given to staff career development and other employment matters irrespective of gender, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partner status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origins, and religion or belief.

Appropriate training will be provided to enable staff to implement and uphold the School's commitment to equality of opportunity and valuing diversity. Any queries or concerns can be directed to the Head.