

## EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Updated: October 2016

Review date: October 2018

Our school is fully committed to the promotion of equal opportunities for all. This is driven by a single principle that:

### ***Everyone at Adeyfield School is Equal***

We will not accept discrimination against others because they are:

- richer or poorer
- older or younger
- smaller, taller, fatter or thinner
- male or female
- staff or student
- of different religious or cultural backgrounds
- physically different
- from a different country
- different in terms of sexual orientation

### **Single Equality Policy**

*Aims:*

We welcome the Equality Act 2010 and the school is committed to fulfilling its duties under it. The general duties are to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- promote equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

The School will work towards ensuring equality of opportunity for all and that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

A protected characteristic under the Equality Act covers the groups listed below:

- age (for employees not for service provision),
- disability
- race
- sex (including issues of transgender)
- gender reassignment
- maternity and pregnancy
- religion and belief,
- sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

### **Rationale:**

In order to fulfil our general duties we will specifically:

- Publish equality information – to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across our functions
- Prepare and publish equality objectives

To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as a school. This will include the following functions:

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Attendance
- Engagement in school activities
- Exclusions
- Prejudice related incidents
- Representation on school bodies eg Student Forum, Senior Students
- Rewards and sanctions

Our objectives will detail how we will ensure equality is applied to the services listed above however where we find evidence that other functions have a significant impact on any particular group we will include work in this area.

This work will dovetail with our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

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.

In fulfilling our legal obligations we will:

- Recognise and respect diversity
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging
- Observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development
- Aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers
- Consult and involve widely
- Strive to ensure that all in the school community will benefit

### **Ethos Statement**

Our three core values reflect our commitment to equality of opportunity and the promotion of individual and collective responsibility in relation to equality.

These are coupled with a commitment to providing the best education for every child, aiming to fulfil the potential of every student through an innovative approach to learning and teaching blending the best of old and new within a supportive partnership with parents.

We commit ourselves to fulfilling our duties under current Equality legislation namely to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. We ask all parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to our school community.

## Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

This school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fair less well in the education system. We provide both our students and staff with an awareness of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents. If incidents still occur we address them immediately, log them and report them annually to Governors.

### *Implications:*

- We believe that promoting Equality is the whole School's responsibility.
- Governors will be involved in setting and monitoring objectives.
- The school will promote key messages to staff, parents and students about equality issues, what is expected of them and the school is carrying out their daily duties.
- The school will provide information to all middle leaders (for dissemination to Faculties and Key Stages) in relation to the implications of the Equality Act 2010.
- The school will ensure appropriate training for staff and inputs through the curriculum for students (particularly PSHE and Tutor periods) to raise awareness of equality issues.
- Staff will report and record prejudice related incidents.
- The school will ensure fair treatment and access to opportunities and services.
- Support Staff are expected to commit fully to the equality ethos of the school, ensuring fair and equitable service to students and the school and to support other colleagues in the school community.
- Parents will be expected to assist in identifying barriers to equality and supporting the school in fulfilling its equality commitment and objectives – particularly through the Parent Forum.
- Students will be expected to support the school in achieving its commitments to tackling inequality, promoting equality and fulfilling the objective of this policy – particularly through the Student Forum.

The school will ensure that individual achievement targets are consistently challenging for all and that focused attention is paid to specific groups with an objective to narrow any gaps in achievement or attainment between groups of students

## Breaches

Breaches to this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the head teacher and governing board.

## Monitor and Review

At least every four years, we will review our objectives in relation to any changes in our school profile and need. Our objectives will be devised in conjunction with our overall school improvement plan and therefore will be reviewed as part of this process.

## Appendix 1: Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 has brought together a number of equality duties (disability, race, gender) and replaced several pieces of existing legislation.

Schools have a duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Promote equality of opportunity (students and staff).
- Foster good relations.

### *Protected Characteristics*

There are nine 'protected characteristics'. Namely:

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

### Checklist

1. Students must have equal access to the curriculum
2. Needs of individual learners must be considered
3. All students must be enabled to meet their full potential
4. Teachers should take positive action to encourage those from disproportionately under-represented or otherwise disadvantage groups
5. Incidents of harassment and discrimination should be dealt with
6. Students should know how to make a complaint

### Definitions

#### *Direct discrimination*

Direct discrimination happens when some people are treated differently to others because they are part of a group with protected characteristics. It can take the form of racist remarks and insults, differences in expectations, provision and treatment.

#### *Indirect discrimination*

Indirect discrimination occurs when a condition or requirement is applied equally to everyone but affects some individuals or groups adversely or disproportionately. An example would be a code that does not include a headscarf option as this discriminates against those who for religious reasons are required to wear a hijab.

#### *Positive discrimination*

Positive discrimination means that on occasions additional privileges, resources or staff time will be allocated to students in order to enable them to fully participate in the school. Positive actions might be identified and taken to support particular groups and individual. This might include targeted provision, resources and bespoke provision to benefit a disadvantaged student or group of students.

#### *Perceptive discrimination*

Discrimination based on a person's perceived characteristic.

## Harassment

Harassment includes where a person (either a member of staff or a student):

- Violates a person's dignity
- Creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Whether behaviour can be defined as harassment or not depends on the perception of the person who feels they are being harassed.

## Victimisation

Victimisation includes when someone is treated less favourable because he or she has complained about discrimination or has supported someone else who has.

## Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The Equality Act 2010 does not change this definition of disability but does make it easier for some people to show that they are disabled.

## Reasonable adjustment

Schools must take reasonable steps and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled students, and prospective students who are disabled, are not placed at a disadvantage in comparison to those who are not disabled. This requirement covers:

- Admission arrangements
- Educational provision
- Other provision made by the school
- Exclusions

The reasonable adjustments duty requires schools to think ahead, anticipate the barriers that disabled students may face and remove or minimise them before a disabled student is placed at a substantial disadvantage. The school is not required to do anything that is unreasonable or impracticable.

## Disability Equality

The school must be able to demonstrate that it promotes equality of opportunity between disabled students and others, eliminates unlawful discrimination, eliminates harassment related to disability, promotes positive attitudes towards disabled students, encourages participation, and takes steps to meet disabled peoples' needs even if this requires more favourable treatment.

In summary, schools are expected to make 'reasonable adjustments' to avoid a disabled person being put at a 'substantial disadvantage'. To this end we have worked hard to ensure that our site is fully accessible.

## Race Equality

Schools should focus on results and outcomes of policy and practice. Race equality outcomes need to be relevant and prioritised with clear objectives. As a successful inclusive school, we should be delivering the following outcomes (amongst others).

1. Raised attainment.
2. Narrowing the gap(s) between different groups of students within the school.
3. Decreases in negative indicators (eg exclusions).
4. Improvements in positive indicators (eg attainment).
5. Improved student behaviour.
6. Parents from all ethnic groups are actively involved in their children's learning and development.
7. The school is perceived to be active in its approaches to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

### Gender Equality

Schools have a responsibility to ensure that it does not treat one sex less favourably than students of the opposite sex would be treated in the same or similar circumstances.

Additionally, the school should be able to demonstrate that:

1. It challenges stereotypes.
2. It is actively working to maximise student attainment for all groups of students.
3. It has a plan to tackle health, sport and obesity issues for example by raising girls' participation rates in physical education and sport.
4. Sexual and sexist bullying and violence are being tackled effectively at every level.
5. The school should be able to demonstrate that it collects and uses data and information to determine changes and improvements in practice that are needed.