



Homewood School & Sixth Form Centre

LEARNING · RESPECT · BELONGING

EQUALITY POLICY

Date approved by Governors
March 2018

HOMEWOOD SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM CENTRE

Equality Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years

DATE OF POLICY: MARCH 2018

DATE OF REVIEW: MARCH 2021

Member of staff responsible for Policy:

Vice Principal Students

Signed.....Principal

Signed..... Chairman of Governors

Homewood School & Sixth Form Centre Equality Policy

Introduction

Equality legislation exists to protect people but also to try and advance equality. Inequality still persists in the UK despite 40 years of equality legislation.

The new Equality Act 2010 harmonises and streamlines legislation that has come before it. The Act refers to protected characteristics:

- Age (for staff only)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on public bodies including maintained schools and Academies.

This combined **Equality Duty** came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to **have due regard to the need to:**

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. (remove or minimize disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics)
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding)

The Act also introduced specific duties, which are designed to help public authorities to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED is set out on the face of the Act, while the specific duties are set out in secondary legislation.

The Specific Duties require schools to:

- Publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty
- Publish equality objectives every year (one or more as is proportionate to the organisation).

All information must be published in a way that is accessible to the public.

Why we have developed this Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for Homewood School & Sixth Form Centre brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability (Equality Policy, Equality Scheme including Action Plan and Race Equality Policy.) It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the

Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community, students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

Overall aims of our Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes.

Issues relating to adults within the school community can be embraced under these themes and reflected in the action plan.

Our approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values; aspirations and needs underpin our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

As our Vision statement indicates we provide flexible learning opportunities and have high aspirations for all.

Our vision statement about Equality

Homewood School & Sixth Form Centre seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but 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 where possible. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by always treating everyone the same.

Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all. We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately or negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between different groups of pupils and the wider school community.

We will consider whether to provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, particularly where the child is not provided for under an SEN statement or Education Health and Care Plan, or where the statement /EHCP does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of students for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of students
- homework
- access to school facilities

- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school or Theatre in Education (TIE).
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare

The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Our Principal will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, students and visitors are engaged in the development of and are informed about the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our governing body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the Principal in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years.
- Contribute their viewpoints via the Equality Focus Group

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this Policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy
- with the Principal, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP
- put forward its points of view via the Equality Focus Group

Our students will:

- be involved in the review of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability. A student based focus group will be put together in order to seek student viewpoints (students from potentially vulnerable groups will also be included in this group)
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the Policy through the school website
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy

- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child
- an Equality Focus Group will be put together in order to seek parental viewpoints. The group will meet at least annually

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy through the Equality Focus Group.
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies will:

- Be involved in the development of the Policy through the Equality Focus Group.
- Be encouraged to support the Policy
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy.

The Equality Focus Group will be made up of:

A member of SLT
 Clerk to the Governors
 A member of the Governing Body
 Parent/s
 Member of staff
 Member of the Personnel Team
 Designated Safeguard Lead
 Member of the Inclusion Team
 SENCO / Director of Learning Support
 Union representative
 A member of the local community.

Using information

We use data from a variety of sources, including exam analysis, Raiseonline, attendance information, intervention logs, Pupil Premium tracking, incident reporting and revision sessions/extended school activities. Student and staff surveys are carried out to ascertain their opinion on Equality.

This data is used to determine the effects of the Equality Policy and inform future objectives and interventions. This helps us to ensure there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups. They help to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, faith, disability and gender.

The school interacts and works with a variety of agencies to support equality, these include Kent Police, Addaction, Behaviour and Attendance Service, School Nurses and Early Help professionals, Social Services, CAMHs, Speech and Learning, various religious organisations and the Area Safeguarding Officer.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school.

Equality issues are addressed through the schools PSHRE and Citizenship programmes.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

Our Personnel team have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development (through SIP and the Equality objectives.)

Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice –based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses. Restorative justice practices are utilised across the school.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

Raising Awareness

The protected characteristics as identified in the Equality Act 2010 are addressed through the school PSHRE and Citizenship programmes, through Restorative Justice practices and through identified areas of the curriculum.

Implementation, monitoring and reviewing

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular the educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups. This policy should be read in conjunction with the safeguarding policy, accessibility procedures and with the staff handbook.

Equality Objectives

Using the views of students, parents, staff and community and analysis of the information as outlined above we have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be reviewed and published every 3 years.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES: 2018 - 2021

1= Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization

2 = Advance equality of opportunity

3 = Fostering good relations

See School Improvement Plan for Levels of Progress targets.

Link to Public Sector Equality Duty	Aim / Objective	Target group(s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff etc	Action:	Who's responsible?	Dates from and to:	Milestone/progress:
1 & 2	To identify inequality amongst protected characteristics.	All students in terms of SEN, disability, gender, social deprivation and ethnic minority.	Analyse available data (exam, tracking, incident logs, attendance) and determine additional interventions	VP Curriculum/ VP Welfare	Jan 18-Jan 21	Further interventions identified and implemented as appropriate.
2	Close gender gaps in English and Open Group to ensure that boys are reaching their potential.	All male students	English dept and Open subjects to identify strategies to engage boys fully in the curriculum.	VP Curriculum & PT English/PT Open subjects	Jan 18- Sep 19	To close gender gaps: English 2017 gap 9-4 20%, P8 0.8 Open Group P8 gap 0.21
1 & 2	Narrow the Pupil Premium gap in Maths in Years 10 and 11	All Pupil Premium students	Maths dept and VP Curriculum to target students for further intervention. Staff (all departments) reminded about how the student hardship fund can be accessed to support students in their learning. PP students have access to online home learning tasks and learning resources.	PT Maths	Jan 18-Sep 19	To achieve national expectations or better. Maths results- Gap P8: Year 11 (2016-17) – 0.57 Year 11 (Jan 2018)- 0.26 Year 10 (Jan 2018) -0.36

1 & 2	Track and monitor the use of Pupil Premium funding in providing interventions for FSM ever students. All staff to be aware of PP students in their groups.	All Pupil Premium students.	Use of funding is analysed and reported through the Pupil Premium statement. Use of student data available within SIMs.	School Business Manager/Heads of College	Jan 18-Jan 21	PP statement available on school website and updated annually. PP progress demonstrated in College Impact Reports.
3	Target the attendance of GRT/Syrian/refugee students to ensure that they reach their full potential.	All students showing as GRT/Syrian/refugee	Progress discussions through Attendance Team plus identification of alternative strategies to engage students in their education. Possible intervention by Education Engagement Officer. Targeted groups have access to any online learning tasks or learning resources.	Inclusion and Student Team	Jan 18-Jan 21	Terms 1-4 (2016-17)- attendance 86.8% (36 students) Target for 2021- > 90%
1 & 2	To target the progress and attendance of SEND students. Provision mapping to be completed for all teaching groups.	All students with a SEN&D need.	Key workers and passport system to be in place. Interventions identified as appropriate. Mentors for attendance provided where necessary. All SEND students have access to any online home learning tasks or learning resources.	Director of Learning Support PTs/Heads of College	Jan 18-Jan 21	2016-17 figures: Year 11 P8 -0.53 All SEND attendance 91.5% Targets 2021- P8 >0, attendance > 93%
1, 2 & 3	To address equality in terms of the protected characteristics through the PSHRE and Citizenship programme.	All students.	Curriculum to incorporate opportunities to address the three Equality Duty strands (April 2011.)	VP Students & PT PSHRE & Citizenship	Jan 18-Jan 21	Curriculum covers Equality. Focus on incorporation of racial equality.

1, 2 & 3	To increase the participation of pupils/students from minority, marginalised or vulnerable backgrounds in school. Increase the diversity of pupils/students involved in the decision-making processes of the school life and increase the participation of students in academic and welfare interventions as appropriate.	Minority, marginalised and vulnerable pupils/students	Identify which groups are under-represented in the School Council and/or student voice processes within the school Set up group of pupils/students to develop actions which better involve the target group	Head of Enterprise College/ Student Leadership	Jan 18-Jan 19	Numbers in student leadership roles increases in identified groups. Number in intervention groups increase.
1	To prevent and respond to all hate incidents and prejudiced based bullying.	Students belonging to vulnerable or minority groups including Sexual Orientation /Race/Gender identity/Disability/Religion or belief.	To review and update existing policies and practice relating to bullying (Opportunity to carry out EQIA). Access staff training. Ensure continuing professional development for staff to develop skills in identifying and challenging homophobia and transphobia. Police and other appropriate services to be invited to cover legal aspects as well as providing a broader education.	SLT Assistant Heads of College.	Jan 18 – Jan 21	Number of racial incidents decreases and all issues are dealt with according to the Ethos for Learning Policy.
2&3	To investigate the possibility of providing a reflection room/time for students and staff of all faiths.	Students actively wanting to practice their faith.	To continue to provide staff and students of a Christian denomination with opportunities to reflect.	Christian Schools' Worker	Jan 18-Jan 20	Opportunities are afforded to staff and students for reflection.

			To investigate the possibility of setting aside a time and place for students and staff of all faiths to meet and reflect.			
1 & 3	To ensure LGBT students are accepted and homophobia is challenged	Whole school and specifically LGBTU students	Addressed in PSHRE and Citizenship programmes. To provide training for Welfare staff (online). New Well-being Centre is available for specific LGBT work as appropriate.	VP Students & PT PSHRE & Citizenship	Jan 18-Jan 21	Sessions timetabled and training provided.
2	To increase social and emotional skills for pupils/students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs	Pupils/students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs	To provide training for all staff around domains based conversations and provide appropriate training for staff in the areas of Mindfulness, Mental Health First Aid and Resilience	Director of Learning Support, Coordinator Well-being	Jan 18-Jan 21	Students are identified and groups run on a termly basis.
1,2 & 3	To audit the provision for disabled children within the school and ensure that where possible students can access full time provision.	Disabled students / students with medical conditions	Evaluate current provisions both within and outside of school. GCF audit. Consideration to be given to providing an online platform and curriculum for students who cannot access the regular classroom.	VP Students & Site Manager and Director of Learning Support	Jan 18-Jan 19	Evaluations completed and proposals put forward to SLT.
1,2 & 3	To audit the number of disadvantaged students taking up the option of the I-college and the grammar	Pupil Premium students	Evaluate make up of I-college and grammar plus stream cohorts in terms of PP proportions and	Head of I-college	Jan 18-Jan 21	Evaluation completed.

	plus stream.		determine next steps.			
1,2,&3	To ensure that all PP/SEND/EfL parents have access to provision for home learning task overview (access to digital technology).	Parents of PP and SEND students.	To put a question on admissions form as to whether families have access to digital technology. To ensure that parents can access learning platforms/portals. To offer parental information evenings as required to support parents.	ALA/ Director of Learning Support/ IT support	Jan 18- Jan 19	All students have access to resources provided particularly with respect to digital technology.

Appendix A: Key legislation

Equality Act 2010

Equality Act 2010

Harmonises and streamlines existing equality legislation into one Single Act.

The Act protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on 'protected characteristics':

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

This relates to:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

The Act also contains positive action provisions which enable schools to take proportionate action to address disadvantage faced by particular pupils. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged pupil group.

The Public Sector Equality Duty commenced in April 2011.

There are exceptions to enable single-sex schools to admit only pupils of one sex and for schools with a religious character to enable them to have admissions criteria which give preference to members of their own religion.

For more information:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00215460/equality-act-2010-departmental-advice>

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/>

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/inclusionandlearnersupport/inclusion/equalityanddiversity/a0064570/the-equality-act-2010>

Accessibility planning

Accessibility planning is a statutory duty and can be incorporated into this policy. Schools must plan for:

- Increasing access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum
- Improving access to the physical environment of schools, and
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people.

Auxiliary aids and services

We acknowledge our duty to provide auxiliary aids as part of the reasonable adjustment duty for all schools as from September 2012.

The school and the Local Authority acknowledge our reasonable adjustment duties under the Equality Act 2010. We will consider whether to provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment. Since 2014 this includes students with an EHCP.

Community Cohesion – Education and Inspection Act 2006

General duty

- To promote community cohesion

Specific duties

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – helping children to learn to understand others, to value diversity while also promoting shared values
- Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level
- Engagement and extended services – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations with different schools and communities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.