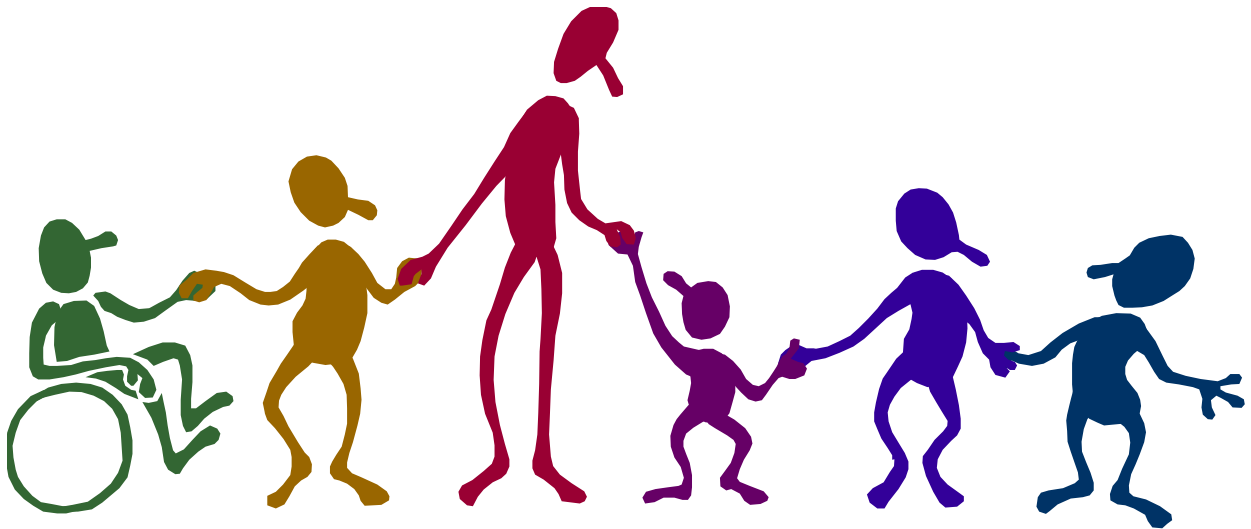


Equality Policy

POLICY TITLE: Equality Policy
STATUS Statutory
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2014-2017

Queen Elizabeth's Girls School

Equality Policy

1. Mission statement
2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice
3. Equal Opportunities for Staff
4. Equality and the law
5. Consultation
6. Roles and Responsibilities
7. Tackling discrimination
8. Review of progress and impact
9. Publishing the plan

Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School welcomes the implementation of the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Community Cohesion Duty. We have chosen to produce this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy document in order to fully demonstrate our commitment to promoting and embedding equality and community cohesion into all of our work.

We will continue to actively progress our work in the area of equality and community cohesion by working towards the achievement of the actions set out within this document, and we will monitor and review our progress on a regular basis.

The publication of this document is not, therefore, the end of a process but the part of the school's ongoing commitment to ensuring that equality and community cohesion best practices are central to all our work.

It must be remembered that school teachers are in a very influential position and their actions and responsibilities are bound by much wider duties than those specified by the equality legislation. A teacher's ability to express his or her views does not extend to allowing them to discriminate against others.

1. Mission statement

At Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, faith or religion 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 disability, and socio-economic background, 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. At Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

As well as the specific actions set out in this policy, the school 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, disability, and socio-economic backgrounds, 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, sexual orientation and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge any 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;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Include 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, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

3. Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School.

We are 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

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality is considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention and bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

4. Equality and the law

Equality is not simply about compliance with the law, nor is it about ‘treating people the same’. Equality is the desire to underpin human relationships with values that develop and engage human potential, unrestricted by limitation of presumption and stereotypes.

However, there are minimum legal requirements laid down by the Equality Act 2010. It sets out the public sector equality duties, consisting of general duties and specific duties.

There are nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, and the duty relating to education and the provision of services applies to:

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

In addition, in relation to employment, the duty also applies to the protected characteristics of:
 Age
 Marriage and civil partnership

The equality legislation requires schools to comply with a general duty

The School’s Equality Action Plan sets out the actions Queen Elizabeth’s Girls’ School will take to meet the general and specific duties which are detailed below.

General Equality Duties

The school is required, when making decisions and developing policies, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation 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 protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

“Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity is defined in the Equality Act as:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages
- Taking steps to meet different needs
- Encouraging participation when it is disproportionately low.

Specific Equality Duties

To support the general duty, there are two specific duties that apply to public bodies:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the equality duty.
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives.

Issues relating to specific characteristics

Definition of 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’.

The definition of disability also expressly states:

- 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;
- 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.

Gender - Single Sex Schools

Single sex schools are still able to refuse to admit pupils of the opposite sex. The law specifically states that a school which admits only girls is not discriminating unlawfully against boys.

Community Cohesion

Since September 2007, The Education and Inspections Act 2006 has required 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.

Community cohesion means working towards a society in which there is a **common vision** and **sense of belonging** by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar **life opportunities** are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

At Queen Elizabeth’s Girls’ School through our ethos and curriculum we promote discussion of a common identity whilst supporting diversity, showing our students how different communities can be united by shared values and common experiences.

Common Vision means a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country. This recognises the contribution made by individuals within any community and the fact that people will naturally hold different ambitions, aspirations, beliefs and life experiences. But importantly, it places a strong emphasis on how they will also share important characteristics and experiences with those from their own and different communities.

Sense of belonging means there is a strong sense of an individual’s rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place – people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in turn; and there is a strong sense of trust in institutions locally to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests and for their role and justifications to be subject to public scrutiny.

Life opportunities highlights the importance of equality – both the importance of tackling inequality gaps, but also the importance of making this social change visible to all communities, communicating fair treatment at all times. By creating opportunities for pupils’ achievement and enabling every child and young person to achieve their potential, schools make a significant contribution to long term community cohesion.

As all children and young people can benefit from meaningful interaction, this Duty means that all schools will need to consider how to give their pupils the opportunity to mix with and learn with, from and about those from different backgrounds, for example through links with other schools and community organisations. Through their ethos and curriculum, schools can promote discussion of a common sense of identity and support diversity, showing pupils how different communities can be united by shared values and common experiences.

Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School already works in ways that promote community cohesion and the production of this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy and plan will build on our practice.

5. Consultation and involvement

The development of this policy and the equality action plan have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from questionnaires, parents' evening, parent-school Time4us meetings and/or governors' meetings;
- Input from staff through staff meetings / INSET
- Feedback at Governing body meetings.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of governors

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities and community cohesion in this policy and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, sexual orientation, gender, disability, gender dysphoria, religion or belief, and pregnancy and maternity, and socio-economic background.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on any of the protected grounds.
- The governors 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, carers and pupils.
- The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender or disability.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of any of the protected characteristics or socio-economic background.

The role of the headteacher (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)

- It is the headteacher's role to monitor the implementation of the school's Equality Policy and Plan and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- 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 or training opportunities.
- The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images 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 headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

7. Tackling discrimination

Harassment on account of any protected characteristic, particularly race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or transgender, is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All 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.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher; HoD/HoY; and headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist, homophobic or other discriminatory incidents are reported to the governing body on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Macpherson report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

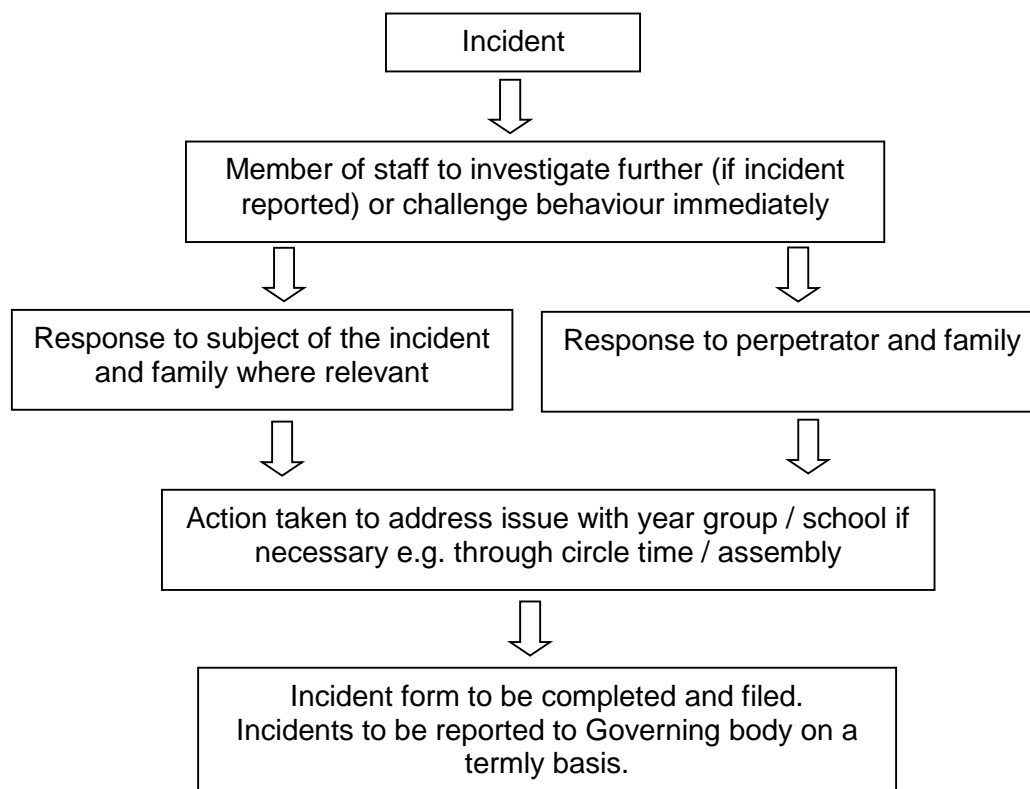
Types of discriminatory incident

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 others;
- 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, religion or belief, gender, disability, sexual orientation, transgender issues, or pregnancy and maternity, or socio-economic background.

Responding to and reporting incidents

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



8. Review of progress and impact

The policy has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire policy and accompanying action plan on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, and socio-economic background, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

9. Publishing the Policy

We will:

- Publish our policy on the school website;
- Raise awareness of the policy through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings;
- Make sure hard copies are available, and other formats whenever relevant.

Headteacher: Violet Walker	Chair of Governors: Hilary Chamberlain
Signed:	Signed:
Date:	Date: