

## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL COHESION POLICY**

### **Introduction**

This policy and its associated equality objectives are an expression of the Governors' commitment to the letter and spirit of 'The Equality Act' 2010 and the 'Specific Duties Regulations 2011'.

#### [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)

We believe that all associated with the school should feel a sense of warmth, welcome and belonging as equal members of the Biddenham school community. Our core values are friendship and compassion, inspiration, determination, enjoyment and success. Cutting across each of these there is a strong commitment to inclusion, equality and embracing diversity as a source of richness, hybrid strength and social cohesion.

Given these commitments we subscribe wholeheartedly to the status of the nine characteristics protected in law under the 2010 Equality Act:

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

But beyond that, we commit ourselves to combating all forms of prejudice, discrimination and intimidation, including those arising from:

- Perceived class or caste
- Language, accent or dialect
- Shape and body form
- Perceived ability
- Wealth and income
- Membership or non-membership of trades unions

### **What this means in practice**

To meet our obligations in these respects we will be vigilant and work tirelessly to combat all forms of prejudice, discrimination, and intimidation by:

- Positive teaching and celebration of the school's values and its commitment to equality and embracing diversity.
- Prompt:
  - Identification of incidents of prejudice, discrimination or intimidation including the use of specific reporting and recording procedures.
  - Assertive but positive challenge.
  - Educational/restorative justice approach.
- Recording and reporting of incidents to identify short, medium and long-term patterns and trends with proactive responses.
- Closely monitoring the structure and organisation of the school, to be alert for signs of unconscious bias and institutionalised discrimination to ensure that Biddenham is representative of the community it serves. Where this is not the case we will be proactive in encouraging the involvement of underrepresented groups and seeking out their views.
- With respect to recruitment and selection, individuals can expect to be treated fairly and have

access to appointment and promotion based on merit. We will select the best candidates for vacant roles based on teaching and leadership ability, experience, professional behaviour and qualifications. Where we have more than one equally suitable candidate, we may appoint a person who better enables us to represent groups with specific protected characteristics.

- We welcome applications from people with disabilities. We will invite all disabled applicants to interview who meet the job description and the person specification. Applicants are encouraged to advise us of any practical adjustments we can make to better enable candidates to attend for interview or undertake work roles (e.g. supplying job details in alternative formats, making special access arrangements, providing signing or assistance at interviews).
- Line managers will fairly review staff professional development and agree development opportunities in line with teaching and leadership ability, experience, professional behaviour and qualifications.
- The school will ensure that there are appropriate diversity awareness updates and that these are made available to parents, pupils, staff and governors.
- Where a person feels that they have been subject to discrimination they should raise the issue with a line manager with a view to resolving this issue informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the individual concerned, they should consider registering a complaint through formal grievance procedures.

### **Individual Responsibilities**

Everyone in the school is responsible for ensuring that Biddenham is free from discrimination, victimisation and harassment. To ensure that we all exercise this responsibility, individuals should:

- Reflect on their own attitudes and opinions and be respectful of others even where they do not agree with them (given that they are within the rule of law, the letter and spirit of this policy and the broader school rules).
- Seek information and advice to better understand human differences.
- Report to a line manager or responsible person incidents that they deem to be discriminatory and / or prejudice related or intimidating and seek to have the issues resolved positively.

### **Equalities Objectives (2022 - 2024)**

In order to meet the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 and monitor the extent to which we are adhering to our Equality, Diversity and Social Cohesion Policy:

1. We will identify a senior member of staff and an 'Equalities governor'. They will meet on a termly basis and be responsible for overseeing this policy and for monitoring progress towards meeting the equality objectives
2. We will collect and analyse readily available and voluntarily given staff and student data relating to the nine characteristics protected in law.
3. We will use this to monitor developing trends in:
  - Student progress and achievement (to narrow gaps).
  - Student attendance and exclusion.
  - Staff recruitment and promotion.
  - Serious incidents contravening this policy and the 2010 Equalities Act.
4. We will undertake periodic staff, student and parental surveys to monitor overall expressions of wellbeing, belonging and satisfaction.
5. We will use this data as a basis for celebrating positive developments and to respond proactively to negative trends.
6. The Principal will publish a report annually showing the progress we are making in meeting these objectives.

Date of Next Review: **September 2024**