

Elysian School

Diversity & Equality Policy



Date Agreed: July 2021

Date of next review: July 2022

Policy Statement

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstance. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect, tolerance and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents and carers receiving services from Elysian School, irrespective of race, gender, disability, age, 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 are able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of students will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support students, 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. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

2. Inclusion in Action

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, to have a 'can do' attitude and to reach their full potential. To do this, we will:

- Use collated data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students.
- Support and promote British Values in our teaching and around the school in the 5 key areas of; Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual liberty, Mutual respect and Tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
- Have a strong commitment to the personal and social development of all pupils. The school vision and values, put together by all the staff, supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural characteristics in all pupils.
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability, as well as whether students are Looked After or are in receipt of Pupil Premium and implement interventions and teaching strategies to fill any gaps.
- Take account of the assessment information of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society.

- Include culturally diverse topics as part of the curriculum offer and use pupils culture as recognisable and meaningful way to engage in learning.
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local, national and international community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.
- Encouraging classroom and staff discussions 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, which are inclusive and reflective of our students and their needs.

Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors. Our admissions policy can be found on the school's website.

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

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

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are 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 including 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 ACT 2010

A new Equality Act came into force in October 2010. The Equality Act brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up a new Act that provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Act simplifies, strengthens and harmonises the current legislation to provide Britain with a new discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged are:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY 2012

The Public Sector Equality Duty 2012 has three aims under the general duty for schools. Whilst we are independent school and therefore not obliged to follow this duty, we believe that it represents good practice. We will seek to uphold the duty in the following ways:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by taking steps to meet the needs of protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life of in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

To fulfil responsibilities with regard to its workforce relating to the Public Sector Equality Duty's detailed above, Elysian School will:

Collect and use equality information to help us to:

- Identify key issues.
- Understand the impact of our policies, practices and decisions on people with different protected characteristics, and thereby plan them more effectively.
- Assess whether staff discriminate unlawfully when carrying out any of our functions.
- Identify what the key equality issues are for our organisation.

Assess performance:

- Benchmark our performance and processes against those of similar schools.

Take action:

- Consider taking steps to meet the needs of staff who share relevant protected characteristics.
- Identify if there are any actions we can take to avoid discrimination and harassment, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.
- Make informed decisions about policies and practices which are based on evidence about the impact of our activities on equality.
- Develop equality objectives to meet the specific duties.
- Have due regard to the aims of the general equality duty by ensuring that staff have appropriate information for decision-making.

We will work towards developing an equality profile of staff to help us to understand key equality issues in our workforce, including any evidence of pay gaps or 'occupational segregation' i.e. staff with certain protected characteristics being over-represented in particular roles. In addition, we note that it is likely to be useful to collect and consider information, appropriately disaggregated, about:

- recruitment and promotion
- numbers of part-time and full-time staff
- pay and remuneration
- training
- return to work of women on maternity leave
- return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disability
- appraisals
- grievances (including about harassment)

- disciplinary action (including for harassment)
- dismissals and other reasons for leaving.

Publication of Equality Information:

- We will collect and use enough workforce information to effectively meet the general equality duty. Where relevant and proportionate we will publish on our website some information about the impact of our employment functions on people with the different protected characteristics in order to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty.

4a. Race Equality

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.

Under our specific Race Equality duty we will:

- Continue to take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any prejudice based bullying behaviour using external agencies, e.g. Stand Against Racism Incidents (SARI);
- Continue to provide students with the opportunity to explore diversity and celebrate difference through our curriculum;
- Record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying, identifying trends and patterns to inform appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children and young people;
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this Plan, on students, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these students;
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such students, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups;
- Continue to comply with the Local Authorities reporting procedures.
- Continue to comply with the Local Authority Equal Opportunities Policy during recruitment processes.

4b. Disability Definition of disability

The Equalities Act 2010 states:

A person (P) has a disability if-

- (a) P has a physical or mental impairment, and

(b) the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on P's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Provide a warm, bright, friendly and welcoming environment for all;
- Create an environment which is considerate to the health and safety of all;
- Provide adaptations designed to ensure equality of access for all to most parts of the school;
- Create play areas which are bright, pleasant & safe to use & take account of individual need;
- Ensure all teaching and learning takes account of our inclusion principles and every member of the school community is expected to promote and demonstrate inclusive behaviour;
- Ensure students are supported, planned for, and able to reach their full potential;

4c. Gender Equality

Under our specific duty we will continue to:

- Ensure that there is equality when recruiting staff at all levels.
- Benefit from a mixed gender workforce.

4d. Sexual Orientation

Legislation makes discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students.

4e. Community Cohesion

We will promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between students from different races, faiths, beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds at a local, national and international level. It aims to foster links between those who share protected characteristics and between those who do not.

5. Consultation and Involvement

We will regularly consult with staff, parents, the Management Committee and pupils on this policy. We will do this in the following ways:

- Feedback from parent questionnaires, parents /teacher information sessions;
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings, INSET;
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys;
- Issues raised in annual / EHCP reviews or Individual Education Plans;

- Feedback at Management Committee meetings.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Management Committee

The Management Committee will do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to students, and responsive to their needs based on all protected characteristics.

The Management Committee seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.

The Management Committee takes 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 Management Committee welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.

The Management Committee ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of any protected characteristic.

The role of the Head of Education

It is the Head of Education's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and is supported by the Management Committee in doing so.

It is the Head of Education's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The Head of Education ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this plan, to ensure no-one is discriminated against during recruitment processes.

The Head of Education 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 Head of Education treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The Head of Education ensures that there are links between the requirements of this policy and the School Improvement Plan.

The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

All staff will ensure that all students 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 based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.

All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism, homophobia and transphobia, 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 race, gender, disability or sexual orientation 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 student'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/ Head of Education where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Head of Education and racist incidents are reported to the Management Committee.

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 Stephen Lawrence Inquiry 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 due to race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- 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, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to students 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

This policy has been developed in line with legislative requirements, we will review the entire policy annually.

We make regular assessments of students' learning and use this information to track student progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of students are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.⁸

9. Publishing the plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements of the Public Sector Duty under the Equalities Act 2010, we will:

- Publish our plan on the school website;
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings, induction and other communications;
- Make sure hard copies are available.

Next review date: December 2020