



Tomlinscote School

Equality Policy

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Introduction

This Equality document sets out the school's vision and approach to promoting equality, as defined within the Equality Act (2010). It covers sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pupils who are pregnant, undergoing or who have undergone gender reassignment.

The policy will cover the following areas:

- The school's context
- Aims and values
- The school's overall approach to promoting equality, diversity and tackling discrimination
- Specific reference to a range of categories known as 'protected characteristics'.
- Roles and responsibilities
- Monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact

The School's Context

Tomlinscote is a very popular and successful School. We are committed to the creation of a happy and caring fully co-educational environment in which each of the 1500 students is able to realise his or her potential and develop into successful adults.

Our five core values of Community, Perseverance, Progression, Excellence and Character allow our young people to grow into responsible, respectful and caring citizens who are able to thrive in the world we live in today.

Tomlinscote has a varied curriculum, with many opportunities outside of the classroom for further enrichment.

The success of this work is shown by the Outstanding judgement awarded by Ofsted.

OFSTED found the effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination to be outstanding, as well as the effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion.

'The school is a purposeful and happy place with a strong commitment to ensuring that all students have an equal chance to succeed'

'They [students] manage their own behaviour exceptionally well and show a high level of respect for others'

Values and Aims

Tomlinscote School embraces the principles of inclusion, equality and diversity, ensures that every person is treated with respect, fairness and dignity and actively promotes the values of tolerance, understanding and justice for all within the school and in the wider world.

Every member of Tomlinscote is regarded as of equal worth and importance, irrespective of ethnicity, race, social and economic background, gender, sexuality, ability or disability and age.

As an inclusive school we aim to ensure that the principles and practice of equal opportunity applies to all members of the school community and those associated with us: students, teachers, support staff, parents or carers, councillors, visitors, members of the local community.

We value and promote the contribution that every member of our school community can make towards the academic and personal achievement and development of all. We recognise the contribution that diversity brings.

We expect all members of our school community to show respect for each other and we are active in promoting a culture of respect for others.

We recognise our role in promoting community cohesion and actively encourage the participation of all in public life. We seek to prepare students for life in a diverse society.

We are pro-active in our efforts to identify and minimise or eliminate existing inequalities and the barriers they cause.

The school's approach to promoting equality

There are three equality duties which arise from the Equality Act 2010 which we have 'due regard' for in all we do at Tomlinscote. These enable us to take positive actions in our approach to promoting equality of opportunity for all. These are to :

i. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

This means:-

- no-one (students, staff, councillors, parents/carers, or any other person through their contact with the school) will receive 'less favourable treatment', unless it can be shown to be justified.
- 'more favourable treatment' can be shown to anyone who is disabled but only 'reasonable adjustments' can be made when it comes to any additional support and assistance

ii. Promote equality of opportunity for everyone including in those in the categories below.

These categories are known as 'Protected Characteristics'. Every person has several of these so the Act promotes equality of opportunity for everyone. These include:

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

This means:-

- Removing or minimising any disadvantages that anyone might suffer.
- Providing extra support if needed. This is called a 'Positive Action' provision.
- Encouraging everyone to participate in public life or activity.

iii. Encourage good relations between everyone.

This means:-

- Tackling prejudice.
- Promoting understanding and respect.

Policy into Practice

The following are examples of the equality duties in operation at Tomlinscote.

Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- All incidents of bullying are recorded against `protected characteristics`
- All incidents of prejudice related behaviours are recorded
- Year 7 have a whole day of activities on anti-bullying
- Equality and diversity are addressed through tutorial work, assemblies, PSHE lessons
- Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden
- Homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic language is challenged and dealt with according to school sanctions
- No longer asking health-related questions of applicants before job offer, unless essential to the work

Promoting equality of opportunity

- Student attainment and progress is monitored by age, racial and social origins, gender, intellectual and physical abilities, culture and religion.
- Student and staff names are accurately recorded and correctly pronounced
- We permit the wearing of Sikhs` turbans, Muslim girls` headscarves as an important part of their religious and cultural background.
- A protocol is in place for supporting teenage mothers.
- Surrey Young Carers supports a number of our students
- Access to a Speech and Language Therapist for students with speech, language and communication needs
- A Designated Teacher is in place to support our Looked After Children
- Wheelchair access is available in all new buildings and includes suitable toilet facilities
- Our Learning Support department holds after school Home Learning sessions on a Monday – Thursday which are open to all
- We have a duty of care for all, with preferential consideration for the poor, and to ensure that we provide for those socially, academically, physically or emotionally disadvantaged.

Fostering good relations between all

- Trained Mentors from Year 10 support Year 7 tutor groups
- Specific support programmes are in place at times of transition
- A strong pastoral system and Student Support Officers ensure that all students have someone to engage with
- Year and School Council bodies ensure students can raise matters of concern to them
- We encourage all students to take part in our extra-curricular activities programme
- School to liaise with outside agencies as appropriate to enable all students to access all aspects of school life
- A fully accessible school website
- LGBT+ group meet on a weekly basis

Roles and responsibilities

Councillors are responsible for:

- Making sure the school complies with current equality legislation
- Making sure this policy and its procedures are followed.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Making sure the policy is readily available and that the councillors, staff, students and their parents/carers know about it
- Making sure its procedures are followed
- Producing regular information for staff and councillors about the policy and how it is working,
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination

Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic incidents)
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of pupils (e.g. young people in care, children from minority ethnic/language or Traveller communities, disabled students, young carers etc.)
- Monitoring suspensions

All school staff are responsible for:

- Modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents
- Recognising and tackling bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equality and avoiding discrimination against anyone
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities

Students are responsible for:

- Keeping equality and diversity issues on the School Council agenda. This may include: the anti-bullying policy and specifically prejudice related bullying
- Developing school/class rules which challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Treating everyone with respect

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Keeping equality and diversity issues on the agenda of parent consultation meetings.
- A shared input with staff on developing policies relating to this area, such as, the anti-bullying policy and specifically prejudice related bullying
- Supporting the commitments made in the Home School Agreement.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- Behaving in a way that supports our equality policy at all times

Monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact

Gathering and analysing equality information

A range of information on equality is collected and analysed.

Student information includes:

- Attainment levels
- Progress levels
- Attendance levels
- Suspensions
- Attendance at extended school activities/extra-curricular activities (e.g. educational visits)
- Participation in Year and School Councils
- All types of bullying
- Prejudice related incidents

Staff and Councillor information can include (responses from staff/councillors are optional):

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Disability

Although there is a statutory duty to share equality information about the school we will have regard to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998 which requires care to be taken when sharing or publishing statistics, data or information to ensure that it cannot be used to identify individuals.

Consultation and Involving People

We welcome all of our `stakeholders` to contribute to our equality policies and objectives. We actively seek their involvement.

Equality impact assessments

The school`s objectives to take forward our Equality Policy are subject to review and alteration in response to the school`s impact assessments. The priorities for the schools` objectives will be set in the light of:

- an examination of the information that the school has gathered
- the messages the school has heard from members of the school community or those linked to it
- an assessment of the impact of current policies on equality

The school will publish as an appendix a series of equality objectives and a range of equality information about the school. Information is revised annually and objectives every four years

Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with a range of other school policies and plans

These include:

- Access Plan
- Admissions Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Pay Policy
- School Development Plan
- SEN and Disability Policy

- Whistle-blowing Policy

Equality Objectives

- To foster a respect for all members of our community and celebrate diversity; promoting a cultural understanding and awareness of other beliefs and religions.
- To ensure that our Looked After Children have the support and interventions necessary to maximise their full potential.
- To reduce the incidences of homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic language used by students.
- To narrow the attainment gap between all cohorts of young people including gender, SEN, ethnicity and disadvantaged.
- To ensure that all students have leadership opportunities and extra-curricular activities are offered to all.
- To continue to develop accessibility for all students to make the school a fully inclusive establishment.