Heathland Whitefriars Federation

Equality Policy

The Headteachers will update the equality information we publish, at least every year

This document will be reviewed by the Board of Directors at least every 3 years

Approved by the Board of Directors: October 2024

Next review due: October 2027

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At the Heathland Whitefriars Federation our core Values, underpin every aspect of school life

1. Aims

At Heathland Whitefriars Federation we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. We aim to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

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

Article 29: Your right to be the best you can be

At Heathland Whitefriars Federation, 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, faith, 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, gender and disability 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. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit our schools.

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Article 3: Everyone who works with children should always do what is best for each child

The Board of Directors will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the schools, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every three years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Headteachers.

The Equality Link Director is Lynne Malzard. They will:

Meet with the designated member of staff for equality every term, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed

Ensure they are familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document

Attend appropriate equality and diversity training

Report back to the full Board of Directors regarding any issues

The Headteachers will:

Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils

Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to Directors.

The Designated Member of Staff for Equality will:

Support the Headteachers in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils

Support the Headteachers in identifying any staff training needs and deliver training as necessary.

All Staff will:

- Have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.
- Ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan.
- Strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- Challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the headteacher.

Teachers will support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

4. Eliminating discrimination

The Federation is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and Directors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every September

The Schools have a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link Director. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and Directors aware of these as appropriate.

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 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 / Headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the Directors on a termly basis.

The Federation will:

- Develop and adapt its procedures on anti-bullying to include equality perspectives
- Support staff to challenge and address any bullying and harassment that is based on a person's race, gender or ethnicity
- Keep a record and report how these incidents are dealt with to the Directors on a termly basis
- Review its approach to race, gender and disability bullying and harassment whenever it reviews its policy on behaviour.

Article 23: Your right to special care and support if you are disabled

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on the 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

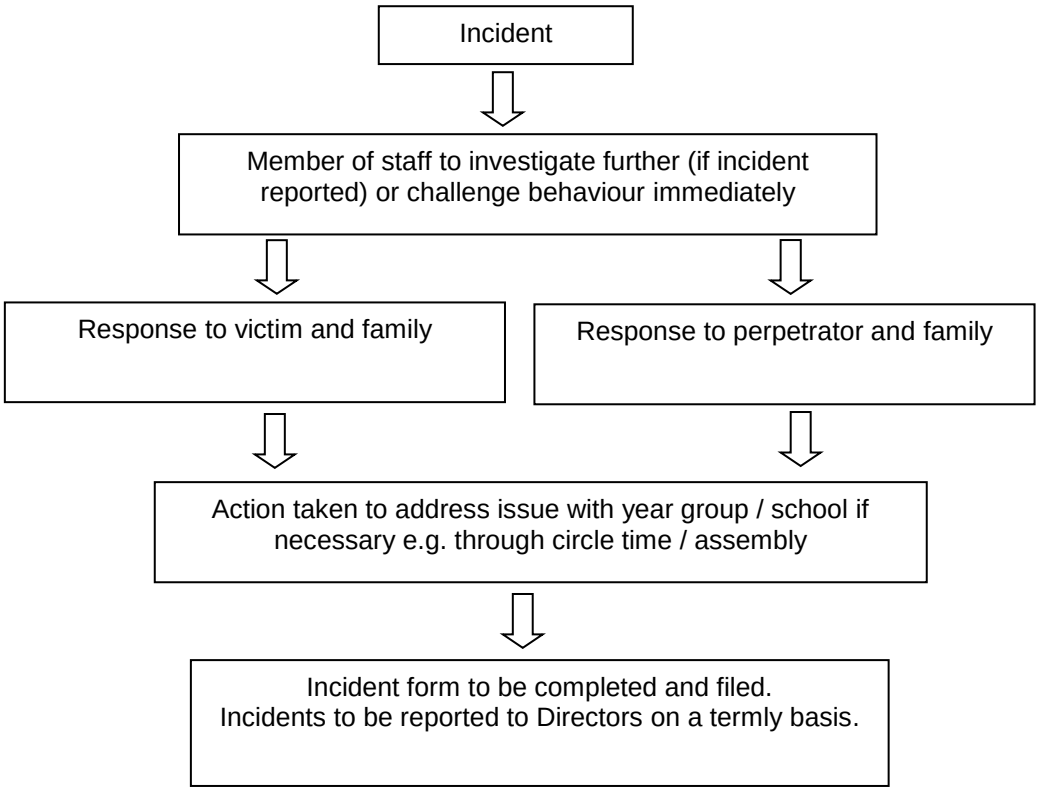
Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- 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 or bully due to victim's 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

The School will ensure that pupils and staff are aware of how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, will view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole Federation.

Our procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:



5. Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the Federation aims to advance equality of opportunity by ensuring that:

- Pupil achievement is monitored by race, gender and disability and any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow the gap are addressed
- The talents of disabled pupils are familiar and represented in Gifted and Talented programmes, and representation on the programmes fully reflects the school population in terms of race and gender
- There is an inclusive approach to ensuring all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School Council by election or co-option); class assemblies; fund raising et.
- Disabled children can take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including educational visits and journeys; lunchtime activities; PE and dance and assemblies
- Extended school activities such as breakfast and after-school clubs consider pupil needs and access issues and pupils attending reflect the diversity of the school population in terms of race, gender, disability and socio-economic status.

The Federation will provide:

- Extra and additional support for pupils who are under-achieving, in order to make progress in their learning and their personal wellbeing, e.g. ensuring that children with visual impairment have accessible texts; that children with hearing impairment have an enhanced acoustic classroom environment
- Additional support for parents of under-achieving children (e.g. reporting progress; discussing needs)
- Additional support for disabled parents/carers and staff to help them to play a full part in the life of the school (e.g. providing a sign interpreter for a deaf parent; ensuring that meetings are held in the most accessible parts of the school to support wheelchair users).

6. Fostering good relations

The Schools aim to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies, and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our School Council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the School's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures

We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

7. Equality considerations in decision-making

The Heathland Whitefriars Federation ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The Schools will always consider the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the School considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

8. Equality objectives

We understand the principle of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

A protected characteristic under the act covers the groups listed below:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex and sexual orientation

To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as a school. This will include the following functions:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Attainment
- Exclusions
- Prejudice related incidents

Objective 1: To train all members of staff and directors involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and non-discrimination by the beginning of the next academic year, September 2025. Training evaluation data will show that 100% of those attending have a good understanding of the legal requirements.

Why we have chosen this objective: To build on our current processes and procedures to ensure that all staff involved in the recruitment process have received the most up-to-date training available to raise awareness of the principles of the Equalities Act.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

Progress we are making towards this objective: At least one person on each interview panel is currently trained in safer recruitment

Equality and Diversity Awareness Training

- Overview of the Equality Act 2010
- Main obligations on employers – from recruitment through to dismissal and beyond
- Overview of EPM third party documentation with direction to the main documents to consider

- Internal Employment policies / procedures and the importance of training
- Common issues in relation to employment
- Compensation regime in the Employment Tribunal for discrimination claims

Objective 2: To raise equality awareness with students and staff, ensuring tolerance and respect towards individuals who identify with any of the protected characteristics.

Why we have chosen this objective: To help foster good relationships across all characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it by having the need and regard to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

To ensure the continued promotion of our Equality Values, please see below our action plan to conduct special assemblies and tutorial discussion time based on the following topics below throughout the year for all of our learners from September 2021.

Assembly/Thought of The Week discussion
Black History Month – Celebrating the history of the black community and recognising their contribution to society
Dyslexia Awareness
Remembrance Day 100 years since the Armistice – Valuing the elderly and recognising their contribution to society.
Anti-Bullying – Combating all forms bullying and encouraging respect for all
Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) Awareness *(As appropriate for Primary)*
Excellent Care- International Day of Persons with Disabilities
Human Rights Day – Raising Awareness that every human is valuable.
Holocaust Memorial Day – Remembering the Jewish community
Dyslexia Awareness
LGBT History – Celebrating the LGBT community the contribution of members of the LGBT community to society *(As appropriate for Primary)*
Mental Health Support
Easter (Christian holiday) – Celebrating the Christian faith
World Autism Day – Raising Awareness of Autism
Ramadan (Muslim fasting) and Eid – Celebrating the Muslin faith
Pride Week – Celebrating the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community

Objective 3: To ensure that the schools promote role models and heroes that young people positively identify with, who reflect and broaden the school's diversity in terms of race, gender and disability etc.

Why we have chosen this objective: To ensure that pupils have examples of people from diverse backgrounds and abilities to inspire, motivate and help shape their character and personality as they grow. To help pupils to recognise appropriate behaviour and try to acquire admirable qualities by seeing examples of successful people from all walks of life.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Display examples of successful people prominently on notice boards throughout the School. Ensure that teachers are using a wide variety of examples of role models in their lessons, engaging in positive discussions on diversity and promoting the idea that it is possible for everyone to achieve their goals in life regardless of race, gender or disability. Assemblies promoting the rights respecting values and equal opportunities ethos of the school and displaying examples of these as constant reminders throughout the School.

9. Monitoring arrangements

We continue to 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, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress and use this to inform strategies to raise achievement.

10. Links with other policies

This document links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Risk assessment

Appendix:1

Check list for School Staff and Directors

✓ Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training? Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides?

✓ Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?

✓ Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?

✓ Are all pupils encouraged to participate in school life? Are pupils who make a positive contribution reflective of the school's diversity e.g. through class assemblies / school council?

✓ Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other pupils? Are racist incidents reported to the Directors on a termly basis?

✓ Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of your school community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?

✓ Does the school take part in annual events such as Black History Month, Deaf Awareness Week and One World Week to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?

✓ Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the school, and are issues such as language barriers considered?

✓ Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?

✓ Are procedures for the election of parent Directors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?

Appendix 2:

Equality and the Law

We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare an Equality Plan which includes our written policy for race equality
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this Plan, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

Definition of disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) 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 DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- 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;
- Section 18 has been amended so that 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.

Legal duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility Plans (Schedule 10)

Schools are required to:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example steps and lifts.
- Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/services.
- Provide information in an accessible format.
- Develop and implement (by allocating appropriate resources) Accessibility Plans which will :

  1. Increase disabled pupils' access to the school curriculum

  2. Improve the physical environment

  3. Improve provision of information.

The duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that schools owe to disabled pupils generally, regardless of whether the school knows that a particular pupil is disabled or whether the school currently has disabled pupils. The federation will need to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments that it may need to make, working with the relevant admissions authority as appropriate.

Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will**:**

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

Community cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on 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. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice Objectives:

Article 28: Your right to learn and go to school

Heathland Whitefriars Federation 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, gender and disability 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 and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other 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;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;

Including 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, gender, disability 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 Heathland Whitefriars Federation.

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 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.