



# Equality Policy

**Ripplevale School**

**Staff Responsible:** Head of School

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**Approved by:**

Date: April 2019

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**Last reviewed on:** April 2019

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**Next review due by:** April 2020

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## Equality Policy

***'Ripplevale School provides a caring learning environment where our students make meaningful progress, relative to their individual starting points. Our aim is to encourage them to develop appropriate personal, social and employable skills enabling them to become confident, independent and aspiring young people.'***

### Why we have developed this Equality Statement

This Equality Statement for Ripplevale School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for race, gender and disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects, which have the potential to discriminate against any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – students, staff, parents/carers, Directors, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our policies and practices have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between groups

It explains how we listen to and involve students, staff, Directors, parents/carers and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

### Overall Aims of our Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes.

### Our Approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

## **Our Vision Statement about Equality**

Ripplevale School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to challenge discrimination and inequality; resolve conflicts peacefully, work, and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning. We are committed to creating inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities, seek enrichment from our differences, and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

## **Our Duties**

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all.

They are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

- The engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- Preparation for entry to the school
- School policies
- Breaks and lunchtimes
- The provision of school meals
- Interaction with peers
- Opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- Exam arrangements
- Behaviour leadership approach and sanctions
- Exclusion procedures
- School clubs, activities and school trips
- The school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- Preparation of students for the next phase of education
- Learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- Classroom organisation
- Timetabling
- Grouping of students
- Homework
- Access to school facilities
- Activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school or school visits
- School sports
- Employees' and staff welfare

## **The Roles and Responsibilities within our School Community**

Our Head of School will:

- Ensure that Directors, staff, parents/carers, students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy
- Oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- Ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- Develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- Monitor the policy and report to the Directors annually on the effectiveness of the policy

Our Directors will:

- Support the Head of School in implementing any actions necessary
- Engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy
- Evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years

Our Education Management Team will:

- Have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing the Equality Policy
- Provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- With the Head of School, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues

Our Students will:

- Be helped to understand how it relates to them, appropriate to their age and ability
- Be expected to act in accordance with the policy
- Be encouraged to actively support the policy

Our Parents/Carers will:

- Be encouraged to actively support the policy
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy
- Be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

Our School Staff will:

- Be fully aware of the policy and how it relates to them
- Understand that this is a whole school issue and support the policy
- Identify any queries or training requirements

Relevant Voluntary or Community Groups and Partner Agencies will:

- Be encouraged to support the policy
  - Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy
- We ensure that all of our policies and practices, both current and proposed, have given proper consideration to equality. To begin with, this means checking all of our policies and practices for their relevance to equality issues.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish

mechanisms for addressing them within school. By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

## **Our Staff**

We comply fully with legislation, which protects our staff from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff, take seriously, and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

We have disabled parking bay and disabled toilet with accessibility ramp. We offer a hearing loop. We are fully aware of the dietary requirements of ethnic groups and make equality provision for all of our students. Our staff team have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community.

## **Responding to Hate or Prejudice Based Incidents and Bullying**

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. We act to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice-based bullying. We would use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

**UPDATE SCHEDULE**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>Reason for update</b>
1	June 2017	Statutory Update