

# The Southover Partnership School

## Single equality plan

Adopted: May 2016

Review date: May 2020

The Southover Partnership School is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the school community and the wider community are treated equally, fairly, and with respect by the school and by each other. This applies to the school as a place of education, a business, and an employer. Prejudice, discrimination, and victimisation are not tolerated, and we work hard to instil in our students a strong understanding of right and wrong, including the importance of inclusion, acceptance, and compassion towards others. The school's main priority is to provide the best education and care that we can, and establish a cooperative working relationship between home and school, so as to aid the development, progress, and needs of all the children in our care.

This plan sets out how the school will promote equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, transgender, disability, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation, in both the delivery of its services and the employment of its staff. It is created by Southover Partnership's Directors with the help of the headteacher in line with the Equality Act 2010 and is the foundation of all the school's other policies – particularly the **special educational needs policy, admissions policy, anti-bullying policy** and the **behaviour policy**. These policies can be found on the Southover Partnership website/ school and on School Pod.

Through the creation of this equalities plan, we have been able to develop a better understanding of what the challenges to equality are within the school and how we can best deal with these. This policy will be reviewed **annually**, or any time there is an update or change to legislation on age, sexual orientation, religion and belief, or transgender equality, to ensure that it is being effectively implemented and remains focused and up to date on issues surrounding equality both within the school and nationally.

### School profile

Students at the Southover Partnership School all have statements of SEN or Education and health care plans (EHCPs). Many are children with autism and challenging behaviour and all have other complex needs, both educational, emotional and social. Most children have experienced a disrupted education before being referred for a place at Southover.

Our school population is mixed gender representing a diverse range of cultures and ethnicities. There are more boys than girls. The current number of students on role is 35 and these students are spread over 3 sites in different local authorities across north London, Enfield, Barnet and Brent.

Inclusiveness is at the heart of our equality plans and we are keen to ensure that we are an inclusive organisation that supports and promotes **Equality for All** within our, and the wider, community. We therefore welcome the Equalities duties of schools. We have incorporated all policies into a Single Equality Policy to create a coherent framework for promoting diversity and equality within the school. The purpose of this document is to show how our school is going to promote equality for disabled pupils, staff, parents and the wider community. We believe in treating everyone fairly and we are committed to creating an environment in our school which is appropriate and accessible to all.

We aim to encourage and listen to local views and involve local people in the work of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together. All school staff and members of the school's community have a responsibility to treat everyone fairly and to promote arrangements for people with disabilities.

## Roles and responsibilities

Creating a school environment that promotes equality and denounces discrimination is a whole-school responsibility and requires all members of the school community to be actively involved in breaking down barriers to learning and barriers to social and emotional development that prejudice can create.

Individuals in the school are expected to take responsibility for supporting and promoting equality in school above and beyond the responsibilities listed below. The head teacher has the day-to-day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of this scheme.

### The Directors

The Directors will:

Create and approve this policy with the help of the headteacher and ensure that is adopted correctly throughout the school

- ensure the school complies with all equality legislation and that the school's equality objectives complement the *Every Child Matters* outcomes for children
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the equalities plan annually and make any amendments to improve on the plan when and where necessary
- ensure that parents are informed of any incident related to this scheme which could directly affect their child
- report to parents, carers, and the wider community on the progress of the school's equality plan through the school prospectus and the school website,

### The headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The headteacher, with the support of the rest of the senior leadership team, will:

- promote the single equalities plan both within the school and externally to the rest of the community
- ensure that all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities regarding the promotion and delivery of equality in school
- report back to the governing body on how the plan is working and any amendments that they feel should be made, as well as feedback from staff, students and parents
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation occurs.

### Staff

School staff will:

- ensure that they are up to date and aware of the contents of this plan and the school's policy towards all types of discrimination
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies as outlined in the school's **behaviour and anti-bullying policy**
- show a commitment to undertake development and training within this area
- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to students
- promote a positive working environment
- report back to their managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, either by staff, students, or any other member of the school community, so that these incidents can be reviewed and action taken where necessary.

## Students

Students at the school will:

- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination
- promote a positive work environment and a positive attitude towards equality when both in school and off the school site
- report to school staff any incidents of in appropriate language or behaviour, discrimination or victimisation that they know to have occurred
- work to promote the anti-bullying strategies outlined in the school's **behaviour and anti-bullying policy**
- set a good example regarding behaviour and social awareness to younger students and their peers.

## Parents, carers, and visitors

Parents, carers, and visitors to the school are expected to:

- familiarise themselves with the school's single equality plan and support the scheme by promoting a positive attitude towards equality at home
- attend any relevant meetings/awareness-raising sessions that they are invited to relating to the school's equality plan
- work with the school to resolve any incident relating to discrimination or victimisation that their child is involved in
- respect and follow our equality when visiting the school.

## Key groups at risk

While the school recognises that any person or group of people can become victim to discrimination, victimisation or unfair treatment, people may be more at risk of becoming victims of inequality due to:

- **Race**
- **Disability**
- **Gender and transgender**
- **Religion or belief**
- **Sexual orientation**

All students are allocated a key worker who works to ensure diversity in all of the categories below is valued by all members of the school population. The school, as part of its PSHE provision has a 'value of the month' which highlights aspects of positive inclusion as part of the delivery of the whole curriculum. You can find all the information about our school's SEN provision including our provision for inclusion in the school's **SEN information report** and the school's **accessibility plan**.

## Promoting equality and social awareness in school and within the local community

### Community cohesion

The school expects all of its students and staff to act respectfully towards members of the wider community that the school is part of. Some of our students attend work experience placements within the community as part of their curriculum offer.

WE work with the local police and PCSOs who visit our sites to meet with students and staff. Two of our sites are based in local places of worship and we work hard to build and maintain good relationships with these communities.

## **Inclusion**

Promoting and practising inclusion in school lessons, around the school site, during all school activities and into the wider community is a key part of developing a positive attitude towards equality and people from different backgrounds. You can find more information regarding our provision for and policy on inclusion for SEN in the school's **SEN Information report**.

## **Pupil voice**

Through our support of student voice we encourage our students to have confidence in voicing their opinions and taking responsibility for the world around them. It is important that we teach our children how to engage in mature social interactions and get along with a variety of different types of people. This is developed through student voice by interactions between students from different year groups, students and staff, and students and the wider community.

## **Recruitment**

The Southover Partnership School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation. The Southover Partnership School acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the equal opportunities policy outlined in this plan is the foundation for all its activities.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

More information about our recruitment procedures can be found in the school **recruitment policy**.

## **Staff**

### **Equal opportunities for staff**

As part of our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment, the school will ensure that:

- all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law;
- staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community wherever possible;
- as an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce;
- we respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice;
- we ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

## Staff discipline and suspension

The Southover Partnership is committed to ensuring that all school staff are treated fairly and consistently and this is held to account through our **staff discipline, conduct, and grievance policy**.

The education and wellbeing of our students is our main priority. Any member of staff who creates a barrier to learning for our students will be disciplined. The **school's staff appraisal policy** provides more information on how the school monitors staff performance. We hope that staff will feel confident to voice complaints and grievances in the confidential environment of the school and that they will trust the school to deal with their grievances fully, promptly, and fairly. The school puts great faith in all its employees, and hopes never to have to discipline anyone as a result of misconduct.

## Behaviour, exclusions and attendance

The school **behaviour policy** takes full account of the duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for students with special educational needs and disabilities. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups, and will take action to address any concerns that arise in this area.

Read our school **attendance, behaviour and exclusions policies** for more information on the processes surrounding these topics.

## The curriculum

The curriculum at the Southover Partnership school is tailored to meet the needs of each child. The curriculum is split into 6 areas of learning and during student induction, the way into these 6 areas is negotiated with the new students. Progress through the curriculum is monitored carefully by staff and students and all is recorded in the individual My Curriculum folder. Such personalisation ensures the curriculum is relevant and accessible. Where appropriate, students may be encouraged back to learning through a very narrow curriculum, which will be expanded once the student is able to trust that learning is safe at Southover. All students are encouraged to gain accreditations at all levels from Entry level to A level, according to their abilities.

The PSHE curriculum in particular focuses on valuing diversity, but the whole curriculum supports inclusion and all staff, especially key workers work with students to ensure both their needs are met and others are respected.

## Teaching and Learning

- We train staff on learning difficulties, autism, Asperger's syndrome, behaviour difficulties, Team Teach and communication has already been undertaken.
- We use contextual data to improve the support we provide to individuals and groups
- We monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender, disability and other groups relevant to our setting and act upon findings
- We take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning future learning and set challenging targets based on individual achievement
- We promote equality of access and prepare pupils for life in a diverse society
- We use materials that reflect the diversity within society, without stereotyping or adapt them to meet particular needs
- We challenge racist and discriminatory language and attitudes
- We celebrate aspects of different cultures
- We involve parents and carers in supporting their child's education
- We encourage discussion of equality issues in all aspects of school life
- We include teaching and learning styles which reflect the needs of our pupils
- Boys and Girls are given the same opportunities throughout the school

- Older pupils are encouraged to pursue courses and activities that they are interested in and not based on stereotyped images of men and women.

### Procedures for assessment

- Our recruitment process includes assessment of each potential learner and making justifiable and professional judgements about the learner's potential to successfully complete the examinations/assessments and achieve the qualification(s).
- The assessments identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to examinations/assessments;
- We ensure that learners will have the correct information and advice on their selected qualification(s) in an accessible format and that the qualification(s) will meet their needs.
- We recognise our duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010<sup>†</sup>. This includes a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service we provide to disabled candidates.

### Monitoring and review

This single equality plan will be reviewed annually by the Directors, unless there is specific reason for it to be reviewed earlier (for example an incident involving members of the school community or new legislation). Governors will review how effective it is in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relationships between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Governors will also review evidence that it is being put into practice in school by staff and students, and whether there is any need for extra training or development sessions across the whole school to ensure it is promoted and implemented as much as possible.

#### Information will be gathered through:

- identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics. This helps us develop and monitor the scheme. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language;
- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;
- children's and young peoples' views, actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution;
- information about how different groups access the whole curriculum and how they make choices between subject options;
- sports and activities choices of all groups;
- uptake of the extended school offer by group;
- exclusions data analysed by group;
- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;
- data on the recruitment, development, and retention of employees;
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion;
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage.

Termly the headteacher will provide **monitoring reports** for review by the directors, through the head teacher report. These will include: progress against targets relating to equality and future plans

- school population
- recruitment and retention
- key initiatives.

## Outcomes

One of the most important indicators of how successful we are as a school in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. Where robust analysis of outcomes reveals poorer outcomes for any particular groups, an impact assessment will be carried out and an action plan put in place to aid these outcomes. Action plans will outline:

- objectives and specific actions to be taken
- expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria)
- clear timescales
- who has lead responsibility
- resource implications
- specified dates for review.

## Equality impact assessments

Impact assessments are carried out as part of the review of all school policies and assess whether school policies or plans are having a negative or adverse, or positive impact on groups and individuals within the school community.

These impact assessments are carried out through an analysis of all incident records including, but not limited to the following: ABCs, bullying incidents, positive handling records.

Staff and pupil questionnaires are sent out regularly which refer to equality issues. Action plans are drawn up for areas that require development.

## Reporting on our progress

A report on our progress towards implementing this policy will be shared with staff and students on the MIS system and with parents and local authorities through our website

**Signed by:**

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**Managing Director**

**Date: .....**

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**Headteacher**

**Date: .....**

**This policy will be reviewed:**

- at four yearly intervals (2020)
- after incidents that relate to, or impact on, equality in school
- after any significant changes to workplace, working practices or staffing.