

Hitchin Girls' School



Equality Information and Objectives Policy

This is a Statutory Policy required by all Academies under the

Equality Act 2010

Date of issue:	February 2024
Board of Trustees approval:	February 2024
Review date:	February 2028

Introduction

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) 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

Our school aims to promote respect for difference and diversity in accordance with our vision and values:

Vision and Values

Our vision

To provide an exceptional education and opportunities for all, embracing innovation whilst proudly celebrating our history and traditions. Through upholding our values and identity, our community will thrive.

Our values

Our core values are Aspiration, Perseverance, Kindness, Respect and Positivity - all of which are underpinned by our community, our sense of family and the relationships we form with each other. We endeavour to demonstrate our values in all that we do and define them as follows:

Aspiration

We are inspired to be brave and ambitious in order to flourish as individuals and thrive as a community.

Perseverance

We have the determination and confidence to problem solve and achieve. By learning from our experiences and supporting each other, we grow together.

Kindness

We care for each other with empathy, compassion and generosity. These are the strengths that bind us.

Respect

We value each other and our shared environment. By celebrating our diversity and upholding our traditions, we strive for equity.

Positivity

We approach school life with curiosity and energy. With our enthusiasm and creativity, we embrace opportunities.

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

The board of Trustees will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher

The equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) link trustee is Seanna Eisenhandler. They will:

- Meet with the designated member of staff for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) annually, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
- Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
- Report back to the full board of Trustees regarding any issues or developments (termly)

The headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to trustees

The designated member of staff for equality, diversity and inclusion will:

- Support the headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Meet with the equality link trustee at least annually to raise and discuss any issues
- Support the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary
- Support all staff to uphold our equality, diversity and inclusion objectives. This will be achieved through curriculum planning and ensuring the consistent implementation of our Behaviour for Learning Policy and Charter of Respect and Kindness.
- Review the school's policies and procedures, ensuring that these are all inclusive and reflect best practice.
- Work with students and parents/carers to review and implement EDI objectives and priorities
- Ensuring an inclusive school environment and curriculum which celebrates and reflects the diversity in our community
- Work with external agencies to implement and review EDI priorities
- Uphold an inclusive culture where all individuals feel supported to flourish, thrive and work at their best.

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

4. Eliminating discrimination

The school 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 trustees 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.

All staff will receive training around EDI in relation to key school priorities and objectives.

The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring EDI issues, and an EDIlink trustee. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and trustees aware of these as appropriate.

5. Advancing equality of opportunity

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

- Removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people who are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. ensuring the curriculum offer is adaptable for individual needs)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school extra-curricular opportunities)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Analyse attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing to determine strengths and areas for improvement, and the school will implement actions in response
- Ensure that self-evaluation and monitoring processes will include gathering evidence to identify challenges and improvements for specific groups

6. Fostering good relations

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

- Promoting respect, kindness and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This will be incorporated through our curriculum offer, but will be more overtly delivered through Learning for Life (Citizenship, PSHE and RSE), Philosophy and Ethics and the tutor programme which incorporates our personal development offer.
- 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/representatives of local faith and culture groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to promote understanding and appreciation between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our student leadership team 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.
- Developing links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

- The designated staff member for equality, diversity and inclusion will also ensure that diversity is celebrated throughout the year, encouraging students and staff to take ownership of this as much as possible through leading on assemblies, events, displays. The EDI specialist will also strive to ensure that the whole school curriculum functions both as a mirror (whereby students can see themselves in our curriculum and feel authentically represented by it) and as a window (meaning that students are given meaningful opportunities to explore other worldviews in a respectful, empathetic and informative manner).

7. Equality considerations in decision-making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers 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 appropriate facilities for all students

The school ensures that the equality impact is actively considered when making strategic and daily decisions and this will be reflected in the minutes of relevant meetings.

8. Equality objectives

Objective 1

To ensure that our school curriculum reflects the diversity seen in our school, local, national and global communities.

Why we have chosen this objective:

As a school we want students to feel that their lived reality is reflected in the curriculum whilst also giving them windows into the lives of others.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

Have an Extended Leadership Team (ELT) Diversity Lead to focus on diversifying the whole school curriculum. The ELT role includes supporting Heads of Department to review continuously practice of staff and schemes of learning in order to ensure they promote equity, diversity and inclusion by encouraging and supporting students to challenge prejudice, stereotyping and intolerance on the grounds of disability, gender, race age, religion or belief or sexual orientation or other form of diversity. Our aim is for 'everyone to see themselves in the curriculum'. Furthermore, students should also be given 'windows' to other worldviews to ensure they celebrate and appreciate difference. A whole school audit is going to be undertaken. Monthly diversity calendars and displays are in place to help promote a wider range of communities.

Objective 2

To use data effectively to ensure that attendance, behaviour and social trends are spotted for key groups in our school and ensure that there are packages of intervention available for their needs.

Why we have chosen this objective:

As a school we want to ensure we are working towards equity for all students but are aware that certain protected characteristics and social groups, achieving this will require additional resources and input. We want to ensure we are able to use data effectively to identify these groups and track progress with attendance, behaviour and academic outcomes in order to build support packages and interventions as required.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

Thrive and Fly, pastoral and behavioural interventions are in place, but we need to ensure that the access to these is always data driven and the most appropriate support package is developed for the particular need.

Objective 3

To ensure staff and trustees receive appropriate diversity training to develop awareness and understanding of EDI and how our school community will be promoting an inclusive culture.

Why we have chosen this objective:

In order to implement this policy and our school values, staff need to understand the language and approaches to EDI - without the knowledge, we will not be able to fully implement the work we are keen to undertake.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

Deliver training around microaggressions to staff and continue to drip feed regular EDI updates to staff. Curriculum audits will also encourage teaching staff to reflect on what they are delivering to students to ensure they avoid unconscious bias and to ensure that the curriculum is a window into the lives of others for all.

Objective 4

To ensure that recruitment processes for staff and trustees allows for equal opportunities and seeks to reflect the diverse backgrounds of our school population

Why we have chosen this objective:

As a school we want to ensure our teaching body and trustee board reflect the diversity of our school community. We want to avoid bias when appointing staff and ensure that staff and trustees from a wide variety of backgrounds feel that our school is a place they want to work as they feel seen and valued.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

We will review the recruitment process to ensure appropriate measures are taken to eliminate unconscious bias e.g. adapting the recruitment process to ensure that there is a 'blind' approach to shortlisting. Training will be undertaken to ensure that staff can do this effectively.

Make use of our community links to encourage members of our community. from a range of backgrounds, to apply for trustee roles.

To liaise with groups, such as ASCL, to develop best practice in developing a more diverse body of staff and trustees.

9. Monitoring arrangements

The board of Trustees will review any equality information we publish at least every year.

This document will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees at least every 4 years.

10. Links with other policies

This document links to the following school documents/policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Risk assessments
- SEND Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Education Policy
- Emotional Mental Health and Well-Being Policy
- Supporting students with Medical Needs Policy
- Prospectus
- Accessibility Plan
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Charter of Respect and Kindness