

## **SCARISBRICK HALL SCHOOL**

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

#### **Rationale**

The Mission Statement for Scarisbrick Hall School is:

*We Support, we inspire, they succeed.*

This Equality Policy for Scarisbrick Hall 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 (see appendix a) as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue 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 – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development. In due course, the school will also publish an equality plan as part of the strategic development of the school.

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

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

#### **Developmental process**

Policy re-written	February 2010
Approval of Policy by Directors	December 2011
Next major review	January 2013
Pupil involvement	via Mentor groups / PSICHE
Parent consultation	VLE
Staff involvement	monitoring and reviewing
Directors involvement	as and when necessary





### **Location and dissemination**

A copy of this policy can be found in the Staff Handbook and on the school's VLE

### **The content of the policy and its relationship to other policies**

This policy should be considered in conjunction with other written policies on Anti-Bullying, PSICHE, SENDA

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

### **The school's commitment to equality**

Scarisbrick Hall School will endeavour to:

- ensure that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve their full potential;
- respect and value differences between people;
- prepare pupils for life in a diverse society;
- acknowledge the existence of prejudice and take steps to prevent it. Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with all forms of bullying and harassment promptly;
- recognise that diversity has a positive role to play within the school;
- staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all ethnic groups;
- the school caters for dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups;
- the school enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith and actively encourages all pupils to understand these;

- intolerant behaviour is always unacceptable. All the school policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities, including all aspects of equality;
- staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice.



### **Leadership and management responsibilities**

#### **The Directors will:**

- ensure that the school complies with equality legislation, including the general and specific duties;
- ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented;
- identify a Director with lead responsibility for equality.

#### **The Headteachers will:**

- work in partnership with the Directors to ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented;
- ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy and are given appropriate training and support so that they can fulfil their responsibilities;
- treat seriously all incidents of discrimination and take appropriate disciplinary action against staff or pupils who discriminate;
- identify a member of staff/s responsible for co-ordinating equality work and dealing with reported incidents of racism or racial harassment.

#### **All staff will:**

- deal with incidents of discrimination and know how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- ensure that they do not discriminate on racial, gender or disability grounds;
- keep up to date with equality Legislation by attending training.

#### **Teaching staff (In addition to all staff) will:**

- ensure all that pupils have full access to the curriculum;
- promote equality and diversity through teaching and through relation with pupils, staff, parents and the wider community;
- monitor teaching and curriculum developments to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school and the wider community.

#### **Visitors and contractors will:**

be aware of and comply with the school's equality policy.

### **Good Practice and areas for development**

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 will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.



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

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We will 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.

- **Teaching and learning**

- Staff create an environment where all pupils can contribute fully and feel valued.
- Teaching takes account of pupils' diverse needs and different learning styles.
- Different cultural traditions are valued in their own terms and made meaningful to pupils. Pupils are helped to make connections with their own lives.
- Teachers challenge stereotypes and build pupil awareness so that they can detect bias and challenge any form of discrimination.

- **Curriculum**

- Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes towards diversity.
- Pupils have the opportunity to explore concepts and issues relating to identity, racial equality and racism.
- The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils from all racial groups.
- Resources and displays portray positive images of different people and cultures.
- Role models and presenters from a range of different racial, faith, gender and disability groups are used to share a wide range of skills and experiences.
- Extra-curricular activities and events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

- **Attainment, progress and assessment**

- The school has equally high expectations of all pupils and is committed to encouraging and enabling all pupils to achieve the highest standards.
- The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.
- Action is taken to remove disparities between different groups of pupils.
- All methods of assessment are monitored to ensure that they are, as far as possible, free of cultural or linguistic bias.



- All pupils are appropriately supported in assessments so that they are able to show fully both what they know and what they can do.
- Particular attention is paid to identifying and meeting the needs of groups that are particularly disadvantaged.
- **Personal development and pastoral care**
  - Pastoral support takes account of religious and ethnic differences and the experiences and needs of particular groups of pupils.
  - All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of post 16 options
  - Appropriate support is given to victims of discrimination or harassment using the support of external agencies where appropriate
- **Behaviour, discipline and exclusions**
  - The school ensures that its procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and equitable to all pupils
  - All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and sanctions.
  - Exclusions are monitored by groupings e.g. race, SEN, disability to establish patterns and trends.
  - Strategies for integrating long-term truants and excluded pupils address the needs of all pupils
- **Racism, racial harassment and school ethos**
  - The school actively promote good personal and community relations.
  - The school has procedures for dealing with racial harassment and bullying.
  - All incidents of racism and racial harassment are recorded.
  - Staff are trained so that they deal firmly, consistently and effectively with racist incidents, racial harassment and bullying.
  - Pupils, parents and staff are aware of the procedures for dealing with racism and racial harassment.
- **Admissions and attendance**
  - The admissions policy and criteria are equally open to all pupils and ensures equality
  - The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered consistently and fairly.
  - Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance. This includes staff as well as pupils.
  - Pupil attendance is monitored by ethnicity.
- **Staff recruitment and professional development**
  - All the posts, including those for non-teaching staff, are advertised and open to the widest pool of applicants.
  - Everyone involved in recruitment and selection is trained and aware of what they should do to avoid unconscious discrimination.
  - Steps are taken to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school.
  - Applications for employment, training and promotion, along with details of staff in post, are monitored by ethnicity.

- **Partnership with parents and community**

- All parents are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- Action is taken to encourage the involvement and participation of under-represented groups of parents.
- Information and material for parents are accessible in user-friendly language and in languages and formats other than English as appropriate.
- School's premises and facilities are fully accessible to and used by groups from all local ethnic minority communities.



## Appendix A

### Key legislation - Equality Act 2010

#### Equality Act 2010

Harmonises and streamlines existing equality legislation into one Single Act.

The Act protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on ‘protected characteristics’:

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

This relates to:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

The Act also contains positive action provisions, which enable schools to take proportionate action to address disadvantage faced by particular pupils. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged pupil group.

The Public Sector Equality Duty commenced in April 2011.

There are exceptions to enable single-sex schools to admit only pupils of one sex and for schools with a religious character to enable them to have admissions criteria, which give preference to members of their own religion.





For more information:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/>

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/inclusionandlearnersupport/inclusion/equalityanddiversity/a0064570/the-equality-act-2010>

### **Accessibility planning**

Accessibility planning is a statutory duty and can be incorporated into this policy. Schools must plan for:

- Increasing access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum
- Improving access to the physical environment of schools, and
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people

*The first plans were required to be in place by April 2003. Therefore, as schools come to review their accessibility plans they should consider building these actions into their Equality policy. A comprehensive Access Resource Pack to support schools with accessibility has been developed by the Development Planning Team at ESCC and sent out to all schools. Schools should contact Darren Guyett (01273 481314) if they require a copy.*

- Community Cohesion – Education and Inspection Act 2006

### **General duty**

- *To promote community cohesion*

### **Specific duties**

- *Teaching, learning and curriculum – helping children to learn to understand others, to value diversity while also promoting shared values*
- *Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level*
- Engagement and extended services – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations with different schools and communities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.