



**OAKWOOD
PARK**
GRAMMAR
SCHOOL

Equalities Policy

Approval status	Approved
Last reviewed on:	September 2023
Next review due on:	September 2027

This policy is underpinned by:

- i) The Department for Education's non statutory guidance, 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools.' Updated in May 2014.
- ii) The Department for Education's non statutory guidance, 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools.' November 2014.

In accordance with fundamental British values the policy sets out to ensure that all members of the OPGS community (students, staff and the governing body) uphold and demonstrate:

'...an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.' (DfE guidance, November 2014)

Equally, the policy sets out to ensure that all members of the OPGS community recognise that it is:

'...unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- in relation to admissions
- in the way it provides education for pupils
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The Equalities Act of 2010 lists the following 'Protected Characteristics' upon which grounds it is unlawful for a school to discriminate against:

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

OPGS understands it's responsibility to publish our equality objectives every 4 years in compliance with our public sector equality duty.

The Purpose

- The purpose of this policy is to define our commitment to equality in both education and employment provision. This policy applies to students, staff, parents, governor's and volunteers who are, or may be part of our school community.
- This policy is published on our website and will be reviewed every 4 years.

Guiding Principles

At Oakwood Park Grammar School we are guided by the following principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

- Regardless of degree of disablement
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- Whichever their sex or gender.
- Whatever their socio-economic background.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised, including gender reassignment.
- Socio-economic status, so that OPGS plays a significant role in improving the life chances of students from disadvantaged backgrounds

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

- Positive attitudes towards those in the school community with a disability, good relations between those with a disability and those with no disability, and an absence of harassment of those with a disability.
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment, including for those students who may be considering or in the process of undergoing gender reassignment.

Principle 4: Policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion and in continuing professional development

- Regardless of degree of disablement
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- Whichever their sex or gender
- Whatever their socio-economic status

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist, and take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- People with a disability and those without a disability

- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men or those who may be considering or in the process of undergoing gender reassignment.
- Students that may be from disadvantaged backgrounds and others.

Principle 6: We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- People with a disability as well as those without a disability
- People of a wide range of ethnic, cultural, economic and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys

Policy Statement

a) In accordance with guidance and the school's ethos and values, we:

- Respect the equal human rights of all our students
- Educate them about equality and the role of British values in ensuring '...tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; encourage respect for other people and respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the school community' ('Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools.' November 2014.)
- Aim to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity & foster good relations through tackling prejudice and promoting understanding

b) We assess ("Equality Impact Assessment") our school practices, policies, procedures and provision and implement all necessary resulting actions in relation to:

- Ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Socio-economic background
- Gender and gender orientation
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

c) We promote community cohesion at school, local, national and global levels, comparing our school community to its local and national context and implementing all necessary actions in relation to:

- Ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Socio-economic background
- Gender and gender orientation
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

2. Responsibilities

The Governing Body has a duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. Functionally, the Governing Body discharges this responsibility through the Headteacher and Leadership Team. A named Governor works with the SLG to ensure equality duties, up to date policies and any required plans are put into place.

The Headteacher and SLG promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- Raising awareness of all the duties within the whole school community
- Ensuring understanding of the broad legal definition of disability
- Sensitively encouraging declaration of protected characteristics by children and young people, parents/carers, staff and other users of the school
- Working with trade unions to implement the relevant duties in employment functions
- Ensuring that action plans are undertaken for all protected characteristics
- Ensuring that the principles of relevance, proportionality, reasonable adjustment and positive action are applied appropriately
- Providing appropriate training for staff, Governors and other members of the school community
- Monitor the outcomes and impact of provisions, criteria and practices on all groups, and respond with appropriate actions
- In the event of expectations not being met, ensuring action is taken in accordance with the status of those involved

3. School ethos, values and moral purpose

The school ethos, values and moral purpose is expressed in our core mission statement – Oakwood Park Grammar School “An Exceptional Learning Experience” with the following strand relating specifically to this policy.

“Excellent standards of behaviour for all our students to create a positive climate for learning based on respect for and tolerance of others”.

4. Commitment to equality

a) Pupils’ attainment and progress

The school expects the highest possible standards. Staff have high expectations of all students and continually challenges them to reach higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement. We monitor and analyse student performance by ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational needs and social background. Any disparities which are identified will be addressed through targeted interventions. Staff use context sheets to ensure that the needs of students with additional requirements are met in order to allow them to make equal progress to their peers.

b) The quality of provision - teaching and learning

All staff ensure the classroom is an inclusive environment in which students feel all contributions are valued. Positive steps are taken to include students who may otherwise be marginalised. We take account of students’ experiences and starting points and are responsive to students’ different learning styles. All students are regularly consulted about their learning.

Student grouping is planned and varied to reflect the requirements of learners and their social development needs. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and analysed by ethnicity, gender and background.

Staff will use a range of methods and strategies to assess student progress. Assessments are analysed for gender, cultural and social bias, and take account of access issues eg. print size.

c) The quality of provision - curriculum and other activities

This school provides an appropriate curriculum for students of all backgrounds. We monitor and evaluate its effectiveness through target setting and attainment analysis. All students participate in the mainstream curriculum of the school.

The curriculum builds on students starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- Boys and girls
- Students learning English as an additional language
- Students from minority ethnic groups, including gypsies and travellers
- Students who are gifted and talented
- Students with special educational needs
- Students with a disability
- Students who are in public care
- Students who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion
- LGBTQ young people
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students. The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages students to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

Extra-curricular activities and special events eg. school productions, cater for the interests and capabilities of all students and take account of parental preferences related to religion and culture.

Students are supported in the creation of meaningful societies within the school. For example, SAGA (Sexuality and gender alliance) and diversity groups.

d) The quality of provision - guidance and support

We actively promote good personal and community relations and recognise diversity as having a positive role to play within the school. All staff are expected to foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among boys and girls from all ethnic groups and range of abilities. Staff challenge stereotypes and foster students' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.

Our pastoral support takes account of religious, cultural and ethnic differences, special educational needs, disability and the experiences and needs of traveller students, refugees and asylum seekers' children. The school provides appropriate support for students learning English as an additional language and students are encouraged to use their home and community languages to enhance their learning.

We expect work experience providers to demonstrate their commitment to equality, including disability, gender and race equality.

Victims of harassment and bullying are given appropriate support using external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt with in line with school policy and are provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

e) Behaviour and Attendance

This school expects high standards of behaviour from all students, appropriate for their developmental level.

We have procedures for disciplining students and managing behaviour that are fair and applied equally to all. All staff are expected to operate consistent systems of rewards and consequences.

It is recognised that cultural background and disability may affect behaviour. Our school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Clear procedures are in place so that all forms of bullying and harassment, including racism and harassment related to disability, sexism and homophobia, are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently and are in line with policies and guidance such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents. All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies. All staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice and are offered support in handling such matters.

We encourage staff to explore their own views and attitudes to difference and to monitor their practice in relation to this policy. Adults in school take care to lead through example, demonstrating high expectations of all students.

We monitor exclusions by gender, ethnicity and special educational need. Background is also considered. This school will take all reasonable steps to prevent the exclusion of a student for a reason related to any disability they may have.

Students, staff and parents are aware of policies and procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group, is always unacceptable. Information and advice on attendance and exclusion is made available to parents/carers in accessible formats such as relevant community language and large print.

We make provision for leave of absence for religious observance, for staff as well as students.

We monitor attendance by gender, ethnicity and special educational need. Background is also considered. Action is taken in order to address any disparities between different groups of students.

The school will fully support children with long-term medical needs who may have an erratic attendance because they are in and out of hospital.

We expect full time attendance of traveller and gypsy students.

f) Partnership with students, parents, carers and the wider community

We monitor parental involvement and look to raise participation of under-represented groups of parents and sections of the community. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all. This school encourages participation of under-represented groups in areas of employment eg. through work experience placements.

Progress reports to parents/carers are clearly written and free from jargon to encourage parents to participate in their child's education. Where necessary information is available in languages and formats other than English. Parents with a disability or with learning difficulties will be able to access school information.

Parents are fully involved in the school-based response for their child with special educational needs, understand the purpose of any intervention or programme of action and are told about the parent partnership service when SEN is identified.

When necessary the school works in partnership with parents and the community to address specific incidents and to develop positive attitudes to difference.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

g) Leadership and management

Steps are taken to ensure the school's admission process is fair and equitable to all students, including short-stay traveller and refugee students and those with English as an additional language.

This school does not discriminate against a disabled student in the arrangements it makes for determining admission.

We will admit students with already identified special educational needs. Students with statements of special educational needs will always be admitted unless, through the statutory assessment process, it is demonstrated that the student's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children.

Comprehensive information about students' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in admission forms.

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equitable and in line with statutory duties.

We welcome people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school and ensure recruitment and selection processes are monitored. Equality and diversity issues are reflected in our school's employment practices.

Everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. All staff and visitors must support the ethos of the school, promoting equality and challenging bias and stereotyping wherever they observe it. We will ensure that staff training continually highlights equality issues. Equality is incorporated in the induction programme for new staff.

The skills of all staff, including non-teaching and part-time staff are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and the school strives to reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

The school opposes all forms of racism, homophobia, prejudice and discrimination.

h) Linguistic Diversity

We welcome diversity of languages in our school and we give them all status and value. We look for opportunities to use our languages to enrich the curricular experience of all our students and we draw upon the expertise of our school community wherever possible.

Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years and assessed for its effectiveness at removing barriers. It will be considered as part of the annual reviews of other policies also.

The senior team discuss regularly the content of the curriculum and trends in behaviour and incidences which may correlate to the issue of equality.