

# POLICY: EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

At Thomas Telford School we understand the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society. We respect all members of our school community and value the differences between us. Not only do we believe in establishing a safe, secure and open community in which we protect the individuals in our care but we also strive to develop attitudes and philosophies amongst the members of our community so that they may play their part in promoting equality in the wider communities in which they live, play and work.

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by seven principles (adapted from *Equality Impact Assessments: a workbook*, published by DCSF December 2007 and revised in January 2009):

### PRINCIPLE 1: ALL LEARNERS ARE OF EQUAL VALUE.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their age, ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their sexual identity.

### PRINCIPLE 2: WE RECOGNISE AND RESPECT DIFFERENCE.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- 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, and women and men, are recognised
- sexual identity.

### PRINCIPLE 3: WE FOSTER POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND RELATIONSHIPS, AND A SHARED SENSE OF COHESION AND BELONGING.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- 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. This may also include perceived differences between Telford and Wolverhampton students.
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

### PRINCIPLE 4: WE OBSERVE GOOD EQUALITIES PRACTICE IN STAFF RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND DEVELOPMENT

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

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## PRINCIPLE 5: WE AIM TO REDUCE AND REMOVE INEQUALITIES AND BARRIERS THAT ALREADY EXIST

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

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## PRINCIPLE 6: WE CONSULT AND INVOLVE WIDELY

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.
- gay people as well as straight.

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## PRINCIPLE 7: SOCIETY AS A WHOLE SHOULD BENEFIT

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:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- gay people as well as straight.

Appendix 1 defines the legal framework informing this policy.

## ACTION PLANS

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.

Every year, accordingly, we draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan and self-evaluation form (SEF), setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

We review our action plan annually and report annually to Governors on progress towards achieving the equality objectives we have identified.

## THE CURRICULUM

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles set out above.

## ETHOS AND ORGANISATION

We ensure the guiding principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working with the wider community

## ADDRESSING PREJUDICE AND PREJUDICE-RELATED BULLYING

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–4:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

Our policy is made known to the staff, students, parents and carers in:

- Assemblies
- Staff handbook
- PT time
- School charter
- the admissions policy

Our response to any prejudice-related bullying or racist incident will be swift, proportionate, discreet, influential and effective. The following documents, stored in the Staff Handbook, deal with the reporting and recording of such incidents:

- Dealing with a prejudice-related incident (Guidance to staff)
- Alleged prejudice-related incident form (initial response)
- Investigating a prejudice-related incident (Guidance to SMT)
- Incident investigation form

All personal data is managed in line with the School Data Protection guidance.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plan are implemented.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy. In particular, they are responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and maintaining systems to deal with and record incidents of prejudice-related bullying. The school's procedures are detailed in Appendix 3.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles listed above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

## INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

## RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

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. All staff receive training on the school's behavioural/safeguarding policy, with additional information provided on:

- the school's position on race equality
- what constitutes a racist incident
- what the procedures are for dealing with incidents
- what to do immediately an incident is reported by a child, parent/carer, visitor to the school or member of staff including office/admin staff and kitchen and lunchtime supervisors
- who they report racist incidents to
- what they need to report
- what follow up actions need to be taken.

## BREACHES OF THE POLICY

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Head and governing body.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

We report annually to the Governing Body.

**Appendix 2** details the monitoring process.

Date approved by the Governing Body:

## APPENDIX 1

### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1. We welcome our duties under the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005; the Race Relations 1976 as amended by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000; the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by the Equality Act 2006; and the expectation in the Equality Bill 2009 that we should promote equality, diversity and good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), faith and religion, gender reassignment and sexual and gender identity.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. We welcome the proposals set out in *Equality Bill: making it work*, published by the Government Equalities Office in June 2009, that from 2011 onwards we should publish a statement of equality objectives for our school and should report on progress towards achieving them.
4. We recognise these duties are essential for achieving the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework, and that they reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act.
5. At present (summer 2010) schools are permitted by law to do any of the following:
  - draw up three separate policy statements, relating to disability, ethnicity and gender respectively
  - draw up a single statement containing three separate sections
  - draw up a single statement containing three recurring themes or threads, as in this policy statement.As we have opted for the third of these, we have ensured that each of the three threads is explicitly mentioned throughout.

### 1B: LINKS TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

#### Plans

- Accessibility Plan 2010

#### Policies

- Collective Worship 2010
- Display Policy 2010
- Pastoral Systems 2010
- Performance Management Policy and Performance Related Pay Policy 2010
- Personal, Social and Health Education Policy 2010
- Special Needs and Learning Support 2010

#### Charters

- Charter for Parents
- Charter for Sixth Form Students 2010
- Charter for Students Yrs 7 to 11 2010

#### Ofsted documents

- [The evaluation schedule for schools](#)
- [Inspecting equalities](#)

## APPENDIX 2: MONITORING

Monitoring of	Is achieved through	By whom?	How often?	Evidenced in
Equality of Opportunity Policy & Action Plan Racist Incident procedures	Annual review	JPB	Annually	School Development Plan Updated policy in staff handbook and electronically in SH folder
Monitor equality and discrimination				
Recording of incidents of a prejudicial and racist nature	Incident forms and logs Pastoral logs	Dep Heads KS3,KS4 and 6 <sup>th</sup> form JPB to maintain racial incidents log	Annually	Log Report to Governors Development Plan
Promoting equality of opportunity				
School population	Recording and reporting of data on admissions and transfers Defining the school population in terms of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, SEN, home location	Admissions Manager	Annually	Report to Governors
Staff population	Define the school staff in terms of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, SEN, home location	Data Manager	Annually	Report to SMT and Governors
Student attainment and progress	Analyse achievement at KS3, KS4 and KS5 by ethnicity, gender, age, disability, SEN, home location. Identify unequal outcomes, benchmark against other schools	PAW, PJH	Annually	RAISEonline full report Report to SMT and Governors
	Analyse exclusion data by ethnicity, gender, age, disability, SEN, home location	PJH, JJF, RAF	Annually	Report to SMT and Governors
	Analyse destination (FE, HE, work) data by ethnicity, gender, age, disability, SEN, home location	GWH	Annually	Report to SMT and Governors
Ethos and atmosphere	Audit of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Council lunches</li> <li>• Year 8 survey (feel safe)</li> <li>• Online survey after e-safety week</li> <li>• Head Boy/Girl meetings</li> <li>• Options programmes</li> <li>• Assemblies</li> <li>• Advisory Council meetings</li> <li>• Discussion at SMT meetings</li> </ul>	KJS HoKS JJF JPB HoKS DHM SMT DHM SMT	Annually	Report to SMT
Learning environment	Conduct audit of teaching, curriculum materials and school displays	JPB	Annually	Report to SMT

