

EQUALITY POLICY

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SLT responsible:	Headteacher
Signatures: Chair of Governor Headteacher	



FEARNHILL SCHOOL

Rationale

Fearnhill School is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background.

This policy represents the response of the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body's commitment to meeting the Equality Act (2010). The policy sets out how our practice and policies will have due regard for the need to;

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
2. advance equality of opportunity for students, staff and others using school facilities; and,
3. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This policy incorporates and therefore replaces previous public sector equality duties such as the School's Disability Equality Statement, Equal Opportunities Policy and its Race Relations Policy. It therefore encompasses the following protected characteristics;

- disability
- gender
- age
- ethnicity and race
- gender identity and reassignment
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage and civil partnerships

Our Single Equality Policy follows the Department for Education guidance on the actions that maintained schools need to take to comply with equality and diversity legislation, and our definitions align with their guidance.

Most importantly, the duty and policy also supports the school's vision and value that we promote every day, that is, 'every child matters.'

Aim

- To develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life.
- To monitor the achievement of students by race, gender and disability
- Through the use of data, support students to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.
- Fearnhill aims to tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes, and creating an environment which champions respect for all.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for;

- ensuring that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs on grounds of the protected characteristics,

- taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents/carers and students,
- welcoming all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio- economic background, race, gender or disability,
- ensuring that no child is discriminated against whilst in the school on account of their race, sex or disability, gender, religion and belief or the fact that they are pregnant or are undergoing gender reassignment,
- ensuring the Single Equality Policy is followed and any action plan is monitored annually
- striving to ensure that the membership of the Governing Body reflects the diversity of the communities served by the School,
- ensuring that there is an Action Plan that demonstrates a commitment to eliminate discrimination and promote equality,
- ensuring they receive and respond to monitoring information on staff via the Personnel Committee,
- ensuring they receive and respond to reports on recruitment, retention, achievement and success rates for students from different backgrounds via the Standards Committee.

The Headteacher is responsible for;

- giving a consistent and high profile lead on equality issues,
- ensuring the Single Equality Policy is implemented and reported on,
- promoting equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promoting respect for all others in school life.

Senior Leadership Team and Middle Leaders are responsible for ensuring that;

- they are aware of the School's statutory duties in relation to equality legislation,
- current and planned policies are assessed for their impact in relation to equality,
- monitoring information is collected and analysed,
- quality assurance procedures include scrutiny of equality issues,
- the procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff enshrine best practice in equal opportunities,
- curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation, assessment procedures and educational visits take account of the need to promote equality,
- the School's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about diversity,
- students and staff induction programmes reflect the School's commitment to promote equality of opportunity,
- staff, students and parents are consulted on and are aware of the School's response to equality and diversity,
- the relevant procedures are in place and action is taken against staff or students who discriminate for any reason covered by this policy,
- dealing with incidents of discrimination or harassment.

Business Manager;

- is responsible for compiling an annual report on staffing in terms of equality indicators for the Personnel Committee.

All staff are responsible for;

- challenging inappropriate behaviour by students, staff, parents and visitors,

- ensuring that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy,
- providing material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images,
- supporting the work of support staff and encouraging them to intervene in a positive way to deal with any discriminatory incidents,
- ensuring their schemes of learning, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of equality.

Contractors, partners, service providers and site supervisor are responsible for;

- complying with legislation on equality and not discriminating against any individual for any reason covered by this Policy,
- following the School's Single Equality Policy and any equality conditions in contracts or agreements,
- considering access arrangements for all when planning repairs and recommendations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Fearnhill will make regular assessment of students' learning and use this information to track student progress and ensure equal opportunities are embedded within all aspects of the curriculum. The progress of vulnerable groups is systematically monitored to ensure achievement gaps are addressed and closed. This data will be used to:

- Report to the appropriate Governors' Committees.
- Produce a summative report to Governors annually.
- Take into account decisions regarding staffing, curriculum and premises development.
- Form part of the discussion with middle leaders on their annual Department or Area Improvement Plans.
- Draw up the school's annual Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan.
- Implement a school equality action plan to be reviewed annually.

Appendices

This Policy is to be read along with:

- a) Inclusion Policy
- b) Recruitment Policy
- c) Curriculum Policy

Definitions

Race Equality

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's **Inclusion Policy**.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.

Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male students and between women and men and transgender people.

Fearnhill will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment.
- Promote equality between men and women.

Transgender Identity

A Transgender person feels that their external appearance (*sex*) does not match up with the way they feel internally about their gender identity. A Female to Male (*F2M*) person will have the external appearance or body of a female and identify their gender as male; a Male to Female (*M2F*) person will have the external appearance or body of a male and identify their gender as female.

The word Transgender is sometimes used interchangeably with the term *gender-variant* but usually has a narrower meaning and different connotations than gender variant, including non-identification with the gender assigned at birth. Children and students that experience or show gender variance may or may not be transsexual, as some will not retain their gender variance following puberty because gender variance can be fluid.

Gender Dysphoria (*or Gender Identity Disorder*) is a clinical condition that can present from as early as age 2 and can only be diagnosed by a medical and/or psychiatric expert. A person diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria may require treatment, e.g. hormone blockers (currently not available in the UK under the age of 16), to ameliorate the symptoms associated with being Transgender. A Transgender person may live their life without being or needing to be diagnosed as having Gender Dysphoria.

Diagnosis and treatment for young people is currently only possible through a specialist team. It must be understood that some people with Gender Dysphoria may not want any treatment. Some may choose to be known by a different name or to wear different clothes. However, most or all young Transgender people (and their families) will need some expert support as they grow up and develop.

Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

Individuals who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment are protected from discrimination in work, school and vocational training (including higher education study).

Less favourable treatment relating to absences arising from gender reassignment is unlawful if;

- the treatment is less favourable than if it had been due to sickness or injury,
- the treatment is less favourable than if it had been due to some other cause and, having regard to the circumstances of the case, it is reasonable not to be treated less favourably.

Less favourable treatment includes the arrangements relating to terms and conditions or arrangements under which employment, education or vocational training is offered.

Discrimination

As stated, The Equality Act 2010 ensures legal protection against discrimination in employment, education, the provision of services and the delivery of public functions, in relation to the nine protected characteristics defined in the Act, one of which is Gender Reassignment.

The legislation states that a school must not discriminate against a student because of their Transgender status. Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice applies to everyone but puts a person with a particular protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage, and it cannot be justified as a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim. An example might be an inflexible school uniform rule which offers no “unisex” options such as trousers for girls, and which would therefore create a particular difficulty for a F2M student.

Uniform

Transgender students will be expected to follow the Uniform Policy, which covers uniform, make-up and jewellery. There is a generally broad range of uniform available for both genders.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students.