



Policy Review and Approval

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1. National and legal context

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status (applicable only to staff).

The Equality Act consolidates previous individual discrimination legislation such as the Sex Discrimination, Race Relations and Disability Discrimination Acts.

Note: Child Protection legislation and procedures continue to apply throughout this area and must be accorded appropriate priority.

2. Mission statement

At Gildredge House, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, and parents receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

3. Principles

- To make the school a place where all individuals are treated with respect, irrespective of race, sex, age, colour, ethnic origin, ability, religion, sexual orientation, disability or social background.
- To promote an inclusive ethos which values individuals from such diverse backgrounds.
- To prepare students for life in a multi-cultural society and world and to encourage an appreciation of the enriching nature of a multi-cultural society.
- To recognise and challenge all forms of prejudice and racism.
- To provide equality of opportunity for students in terms of social and academic progress and staff in terms of professional development.
- To consult and involve all groups of people in the review of this policy.
- To take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if it requires more favourable treatment.
- To liaise with parents and value their knowledge of their child and respect the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.

4. Responsibilities and implementation

The Governing Board

The Governors have overall responsibility for approving and reviewing this policy.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Head Teacher is responsible for raising awareness of this policy, major updates and dealing with complaints (see below). Any member of SLT should be alerted over concerns in this area. All members of SLT should take due responsibility for their Line Managed areas.

Pastoral System

The Heads of Year (HOY) are responsible for:

- dealing with and recording any issues relating to students; and

- ensuring that the elements of Tutor Period programme which address such issues are implemented effectively.

Departments

Heads of Department (HOD) are responsible for:

- promoting and raising awareness of equal opportunities within their curriculum area; and
- ensuring that all inclusion and special needs issues within their department are addressed.

In particular in addition:

The SEN Department will provide appropriate guidance on specific students and be the first contact point for staff requiring further information.

The Religious Studies Department will provide information as necessary on religious observance (e.g. if students may be fasting).

All Staff

All staff members should seek to:

- deal with incidents between students when they occur in line with the Behaviour for Learning and Exclusion Policies;
- challenge racial and cultural bias, disability and stereotyping;
- support students in their classes for whom English is an Additional Language; and
- challenge inappropriate comments, symbols and strategies, and explain to students why such things are wrong and take action as appropriate.

Students

All students should seek to:

- treat other students with respect regardless of race, colour, ethnic origin, ability, religion, sex, age, sexual orientations, disability or social background;
- treat all staff and visitors in a similarly respectful manner; and
- report incidents of bullying or discrimination to a member of staff.

Visitors and Contractors

All visitors are expected to comply fully with this policy.

5. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

The school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

Teaching and learning

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students;
- monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and implements actions designed to minimise any gaps;
- take account of the achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;

- use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning; and
- include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our students.

Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability, ability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour for Learning and Exclusions Policies. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and accounted for.

6. Employment issues

The Governing Board recognises its responsibilities in the employment of staff in the school. In accordance with those responsibilities, it wishes to ensure the fair and equal treatment of all of its staff, all those who are applicants to work in the school and those individuals who undertake work on school premises.

Vacancies will be advertised openly and will normally be available for members of staff in the school to apply. In most cases vacancies will be advertised externally.

All decisions relating to appointments or promotions will be conducted in accordance with the principles on which this policy is based.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

Governors have overall responsibility for this policy.

We will collect and analyse evidence and data on student achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability, and use this to inform strategies to raise achievement.

8. Complaints

All allegations will be fully investigated. All complaints and issues should be referred as follows:

- Students -> Form Tutor/HOY.
- Parents -> Form Tutor/HOY if it concerns their child, or to the Head Teacher if it is a more general or serious nature.
- Staff -> Line Manager, or to the Head Teacher if it is a more general or serious nature.

If any further information is required, the Senior Leadership Team should be contacted in the first instance.

9. Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour for Learning and Exclusions Policies
- Admissions Policy
- SEN Information Report and Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- School Improvement Plan
- Accessibility Plan
- Assessment Policy
- Examinations Policies

Appendix 1: Equality Objectives

1. Our equality objective is to seek to ensure that every student achieves their potential irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or social background.
We aim to accomplish this by our established procedures for monitoring and mentoring students. Our progress is fully assessed annually by analysing student achievement.
2. To seek to ensure all staff are treated equitably regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status.
3. To offer a fully transparent process for recruitment and to ensure that all backgrounds are treated equitably throughout each stage of the process.
4. To continue to reduce the attainment and progress gap between protected groups, disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged student groups. Offering appropriate and focused intervention to support them, throughout each stage of their schooling. We focus on every student performing to the best of their ability and provide equal opportunity to do so.

Appendix 2: Equality Plan - Checklist for staff and Governors

- Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both students and staff e.g. student achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training? Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides?
- How has the Equality Plan been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents and students?
- Is student achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?
- Are all students encouraged to participate in school life? Are students who make a positive contribution reflective of the school's diversity e.g. through class assemblies / school council?
- Is bullying and harassment of students and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other students? Are racist incidents reported to the Governing Board and Local Authority on a termly basis?
- Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of your school community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as Tutor time and class assemblies?
- Does the school take part in annual events such as Black History Month, Deaf Awareness Week and One World Week to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to students, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents and the community attend held in an accessible part of the school, and are issues such as language barriers considered?
- Are the accessibility needs of parents, students and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?
- Are procedures for the election of Parent Governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?