



KING EDWARD VI  
SHELDON HEATH ACADEMY

## **EQUALITIES AND COHESION POLICY**

The Academy is committed to promoting high levels of achievement for all in a caring and supportive environment. Every student is unique and the Academy is committed to promoting equality for all. This will be achieved in the spirit of openness and through the commitment to continue working towards developing shared values.

### **Legal duties**

1. The Academy welcomes its duties under the Race Relations 1976 as amended by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000; the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005; and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by the Equality Act 2006.
2. The Academy welcomes its duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. The Academy recognises that these four sets of 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 1998.
4. Summaries of the Academy's legal obligations are available on request.

### **Guiding principles**

In fulfilling the legal obligations referred to above, the Academy is guided by seven principles.

#### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value**

The Academy sees all learners and potential learners as of equal value:

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

#### **Principle 2: The Academy recognises and respects diversity**

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Academy policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to 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, women and men are recognised.

### **Principle 3: The Academy fosters positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

The Academy intends that all policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and able people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities who are 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

### **Principle 4: Staff recruitment, retention and development**

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.

### **Principle 5: The Academy aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, the Academy takes 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.

### **Principle 6: The Academy consults 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. The Academy involves:

- 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.

### **Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit**

The Academy intends that 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.

### **Promoting a cohesive community**

The Academy is promoting a cohesive community by:

- Collecting and analysing school data and other gender equality relevant information,

including data about our local area.

- Working to consult all staff, pupils, parents and relevant local communities.
- Where appropriate, reviewing all policies and practices to assess the ways in which they might impact on cohesion.

Ensuring governors, staff, pupils, parents and others in the Academy are accountable and understand their responsibilities with regard to preventing

- discrimination and harassment and promoting equality and cohesion.
- Assessing and addressing the causes of any gender pay gap.
- Publishing and implementing an Action Plan with the proposed objectives and actions as part of our wider equalities plan

The Academy is committed to:

- Set out the results of reviews and monitoring exercises
- Report on progress annually through appropriate identified channels
- Review and revise the Policy and Action Plan at least every three years

The Academy recognises that the actions resulting from a policy are what make a difference and thus each year an action plan is drawn within the framework of the overall academy improvement plan, setting out the specific actions and projects we shall undertake to implement the principles in paragraph 5 above.

## **Ethos and organisation**

The Academy ensures that the principles listed in paragraph 5 above apply also to the full range of policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- learners' progress, attainment and assessment
- learners' 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 in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

## **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying**

The Academy is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2:

- 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, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.
- Staff are guided on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.
- The Academy takes seriously the obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of race-related incidents and how they were dealt with.

## **The curriculum**

- The Academy keeps each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that

teaching and learning reflect the seven principles in paragraph 5 above.

## **Educational Services**

The Academy will:-

- Provide alternative teaching and learning approaches for specific requirements.
- Organise individual packages of learning, technical, financial or personal support in conjunction with internal departments and external agencies.
- Strive to exploit advances in technology to the full advantage of the student or employee.
- Offer students with disabilities and special needs appropriate advice and support throughout their school career as deemed appropriate by the school, through the:-
  - Brays Outreach Team
  - Hearing Impaired Service
  - Visually Impaired Service
  - Pupil and Support Service
  - Educational Psychology Service
  - Specialist Support Services
- Make special provision for examination arrangements as required.
- Provide advice and training to staff on specific area of disability, best practice and current legislation.
- Provide education for students on disability and associated issues.
- In addition, the school will strive, where practical and economical, to create a teaching and learning environment which is accessible to all students and employees.

In addition, a number of outside agencies may be drawn on for advice and resources. These may include:-

- Disability Service Team Employment Service
- Disability Rights Commission
- Royal National Institute for the Blind
- Royal National Institute for the Deaf
- Dyslexia Association and other organisations which the school deems appropriate

## **Employment**

The legislation makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate unjustifiably/unreasonably against a disabled person in the field of employment. It also places a duty on employers to make reasonable adjustments to prevent any substantial disadvantage which a job applicant or disabled employee may experience in comparison with non-disabled people. Such adjustments may include where economic alterations to premises, equipment, selection procedures, training, work procedures etc. The employer is under an obligation to make such adjustments if he or she has knowledge of an employee's disability or could reasonably be expected to know of it.

It is the Academy's intention to appoint the best person for the job. Equally it is committed to ensuring that disabled people receive full and proper consideration throughout the whole recruitment process.

The Academy:-

- Considers areas of under-representation within the workforce and any positive measures which can be adopted to redress this.
- Welcomes applications from disabled people.
- Monitors all aspects of the recruitment process and workforce statistics in order to identify action required to implement this policy successfully.

- Ensures that disabled employees have equality of opportunity with regard to career development.
- Retain, wherever possible, employees who become disabled in post. Appropriate retraining and rehabilitation will be considered.
- Works closely with the individual and, if required, specialist agencies in implementing the policy.
- Sends copies of the relevant job vacancy, in the preferred medium where possible, to all people with disabilities who request these.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

Stakeholders in the Academy have a commitment to:

- Being proactive in promoting racial equality and good race relations and tackling racism.
- Encouraging, supporting and enabling all students and staff to reach their potential.
- Working in partnership with parents and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate equality and cohesion.
- Ensuring that the policy is followed.

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

A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

The Principal 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. The Heads of House are responsible for ensuring that all students in their house abide to the principles of this policy and sanctions are used as appropriate where needed.

A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

All staff are expected to:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom.
- Deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum.
- Support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language.
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.
- Help eliminate unlawful discrimination.
- Prepare and/or help deliver a curriculum, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, Academy journeys and extended Academy activities (including work with parents) that take account of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote cohesion and equality.
- Students and parents have a proportionate responsibility to understand and act in accordance with
- the policy, as do visitors and users of the school site. In addition:
- Parents are expected to:
  - Support the school when dealing with any discrimination incidents.
  - Report incidents of discrimination to the Academy.

- Students are expected to:
  - Report all incidents of discrimination to staff.
  - Never discriminate against others (peers, staff, etc).
  - Respect the culture and heritage of all members of the school community.

## **Religious observance**

The Academy respects the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and complies with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

## **Information and resources**

The Academy ensures that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents.

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.

## **Staff development and training**

The Academy ensures that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

## **Implementation of the policy**

The Heads of House play the lead role in development, implementation and monitoring of the policy. They will do this through the review of data and information presented to them at meetings.

## **Breaches of the policy**

At the Academy we believe in a 'no-blame' culture should prevail. However this does not distract from the need to deal with such issues as they arise. Thus breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other academy's policies are dealt with, as determined by the Principal and governing body.

Should a breach of policy take place:

- Initially an investigation of the incident will take place. Relevant parties will be asked to make a statement.
- In the case of an incident between two students the Vice Principal will oversee the investigation delegating responsibility as appropriate.
- In the case of an incident involving a member of staff the Principal will oversee the investigation, in line with LEA guidelines.
- Action will follow appropriate procedures.
- The Principal will oversee incidents involving parents and visitors to the school.
- Mutual respect, openness and dialogue will underpin the Academy's approach.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The Academy collects, studies and uses quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and makes adjustments as appropriate. In particular the Academy collects, analyses and uses 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.

To review good practice, the Academy makes use of a range of auditing schedules.

There is a policy briefing for staff at least once a year. New staff and NQTs have the policy built into their induction programme.

The policy will be reviewed on annually by the Curriculum committee.