

Equality and Diversity Policy



Approved by: Penny Harris (Director) Jane Cox (Director) **Date:** 23rd September 2019

Last reviewed on: 7th September 2018

Next review due by: 23rd September 2020

All policies are generated and reviewed with an awareness of equality and diversity in relation to pupils, staff and visitors. All policies are generated and reviewed placing safeguarding at the heart of all that we do.

1. Introduction

This school is actively committed to the promotion of genuine equality for all and this policy sets out our commitment to promote equality of opportunity for everyone, without prejudice or discrimination. On Track actively promotes and develops pupils' positive attitudes to the diverse society in which we all live and the curriculum enables staff and pupils together to discuss issues relating to equality, whilst also aiming to develop equal opportunities throughout the On Track community. We are committed to creating an inclusive working environment to maximise the potential of all staff, providing equal opportunities in all aspects of employment and avoiding unlawful discrimination at work.

2. Aims of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

- To prepare pupils for life in a diverse society
- To ensure that all learners have equal access to a curriculum which meets their needs and enables them to achieve their potential
- To ensure that staff are given opportunities for personal development to encourage them to achieve their potential
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins
- To eliminate prejudice, discrimination and harassment of any kind and work collaboratively with relevant outside agencies to remove barriers to participation and learning
- To ensure that all pupils, parents, staff and visitors feel welcome, safe, valued and respected within the school
- To ensure that equality is an integral part of all planning and decision making within the school
- To ensure that all referral, recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve
- To ensure that everyone is aware of our equal opportunities policies, including pupils, teaching staff, education support staff, Directors and parents.
- To develop a meaningful accessibility policy and plan to increase access to all pupils, staff and visitors

3. The Equality Act 2010 and Specific Duties Regulations 2012

Everyone in Britain is protected from unlawful behaviour by the Equality Act 2010. The 'protected characteristics' under the Act are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

Under the Act, it is unlawful to discriminate, harass or victimise someone because they have, or are perceived to have a protected characteristic or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. The Act requires all organisations to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share or have different protected characteristics.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

4. Our Approach

Our school opposes all forms of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment and adopts a zero tolerance approach to prejudice of any kind. We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed and to achieve this we will ensure that:

- curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality
- policies and procedures are written with an awareness of equality and diversity
- the curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families
- there are opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to identity and equality
- the promotion of attitudes and values that celebrate and respect diversity and challenge discriminatory behaviour and language wherever it occurs
- the use of images and materials which positively reflect a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles
- there is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, social background and sexual orientation.
- reasonable adjustments are made as needed to maximise the potential of all pupils

To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that:

- adults in the school will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality
- it is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the school and to use targeted supportive interventions
- barriers to participation usually involve multiple factors and each pupil is supported using a holistic approach
- a range of teaching methods must be used to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils
- all pupils are actively encouraged to engage fully in their own learning
- additional staff training may be required to ensure that there is no inadvertent discrimination and outside agencies and organisations may be approached for advice

Within our school there is an ethos and culture based on mutual respect. To foster this ethos we ensure that:

- we strive to achieve a feeling of openness and tolerance which welcomes everyone to the centre
- the pupils are encouraged to greet visitors with friendliness and respect
- the displays around the school reflect diversity and are frequently monitored
- reasonable adjustments are made to ensure access for pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; this not only includes physical access, but takes account wider access to school information and activities (See Accessibility Policy and Plan)
- provision is made to cater for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs of all pupils (See SMSC Policy)
- all efforts are taken to ensure that learning resources and activities, communications and assessment procedures are free from discrimination and bias and actively promote and celebrate diversity
- pupils' views are actively encouraged and respected; pupils are given an effective voice (See Pupil Voice policy)
- positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils feel welcomed and included
- we acknowledge that sometimes the negative attitudes expressed by pupils arise from views that they may hear expressed at home. In these situations, we try to work with parents, accepting that they are entitled to their views, but helping them to see the negative impact that expressing these views may have for their son/daughter.
- all reports of incidents of discrimination, including discriminatory/derogatory language, prejudice or harassment relating to the protected characteristics are used to monitor incidents and inform future planning and practice
- issues arising in the school relating to inclusion and equality are used to inform reviews of the Accessibility Plan and the School Development Plan

Equality is promoted throughout the staff recruitment, line management and professional development process by ensuring that:

- all posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants
- all those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do avoid discrimination to ensure equality of opportunity
- employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and the impact of policies are kept under regular review

5. Review

In order to ensure that this policy is relevant it would be helpful to receive feedback. If you have any comments to make, or suggestions for additions or amendments, please email directors@ontrackededucation.com