



# Hedgewood School

## Equality and Diversity Policy & Plan

Date policy last reviewed: January 2024

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Co- headteachers      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of governors      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Last updated: 14 January 2024

## 1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Our school aims to promote respect for difference and diversity in accordance with our values, such as:

- Leading Excellence in Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Provision
  - Ensuring outstanding person-centered achievement and outcomes
  - Including everyone in meaningful and safeguarded life

We value:

- our pupils and their families. We strive to keep them safe and offer an excellent education, personal development, training and inclusion.
- our staff at all levels and give them the best training opportunities to develop and excel as professionals in the work of supporting pupils with Autism and Complex communication and learning difficulties.
- our local partnerships, as we look to support excellent attitudes and inclusion for pupils in the wider community
- our work with colleagues from other fields such as medical and social care, speech and language therapy and physiotherapy. In this way we secure the very best outcomes for our pupils
- our specialist provision that enhances and supports our work and is integral to the life of the school. PE and music, for example, give all our children and young adults the opportunity to participate in activities and experiences that affirm their creativity, imagination and emotional wellbeing
- British Values as enshrined in the importance of the law and democracy. Hedgewood School reflects such values in its promotion of tolerance, fairness and the right of every individual to expect kindness, respect, support and the freedom to exist within the law.

Our young people will:

- have well-developed independence and self-care skills
- be confident communicative individuals who want to be actively included in life and the community beyond school
- thrive in appropriate, differentiated social settings and as part of our school community, respecting and celebrating differences
- be confident self-advocates and make reasoned and informed decisions appropriate to their needs and wishes.

- have developed an ability to regulate their distress and anxiety associated with Autism, Sensory Integration issues and other neurological or mental health conditions
- have the skills to keep themselves safe and healthy
- have appropriate vocational skills, including literacy and numeracy at the highest achievable levels

Our school is also committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues, embedded in all our training which is designed to ensure we include everyone in meaningful and safeguarded life, with reference to the Equality Act 2010, including understanding disability issues.

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities. Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a pupil with disabilities faces in comparison with a pupil without disabilities. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the co-headteachers

The co-headteachers will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

The designated member of staff for equality will:

- Support the co-headteachers in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Support the co-headteachers in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

#### **4. Eliminating discrimination**

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act – for example, during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every September.

The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

#### **5. Advancing equality of opportunity**

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

#### **6. Fostering good relations**

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- All pupils will be entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need, and we take every opportunity to promote and advance equality. We have developed appropriate curriculum pathways for all pupils in all vulnerable groups.
- The school curriculum reflects an awareness of the ethnic, gender, class, ability, experiences, age and special needs of all pupils. It promotes understanding and valuing of ethnic difference and gender equality and caters for all abilities in both content and delivery.
- The school will ensure PSHE lessons are designed for pupils to develop their knowledge of the world and the importance of equality. It provides opportunities for girls and boys to develop interests and skills in all areas and activities. It encourages pupils to recognise that communities here and in other parts of the world have their own values, traditions and everyday living patterns. It encourages awareness of other cultures.
- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other

curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.

- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community, such as organising school trips and activities based around the local community.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

## 7. Equality considerations in decision-making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made in relation to policy or procedure at Hedgewood school.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils.
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

The school keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment-Appendix A) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

## 8. Equality objectives

**Objective 1:** To ensure that the school promotes role models and heroes that young people positively identify with, who reflect and broaden the school's diversity in terms of race, gender and other protected characteristics.

**Why we have chosen this objective:** To raise equality awareness with students and staff, ensuring we recognise and respect difference.

**To achieve this objective, we plan to:** ensure that equality and diversity are embedded in the curriculum and in collective worship.

**Objective 2:** Train all members of staff and governors involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and non-discrimination by the beginning of the next academic year. Training evaluation data will show that 100% of those attending have a good understanding of the legal requirements.

**Why we have chosen this objective:** There will be equality of opportunity all our staff across the school, regardless of protected characteristics. The School will provide an inclusive, professional and secure environment for all.

**To achieve this objective, we plan to:** observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. *(e.g. Have in place a reasonable adjustment agreement for all staff with disabilities by July, to meet their needs better and ensure that any disadvantages they experience are addressed.)*

**Objective 3:** To improve attendance and persistent absence rates for all significant groups of students identified as having significant barriers to learning, including those individuals who identify with any of the protected characteristics.

**Why we have chosen this objective:** we have the highest expectations of all our students.

**To achieve this objective, we plan to:** further develop all aspects of attendance monitoring and response; with support from the Local Authority Attendance Support Team to ensure best practice

**Objective 4:** To review levels of parental and pupil engagement in learning and school life, across all activities to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement.

**Why we have chosen this objective:** to foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging to our school community.

**To achieve this objective, we plan to:** increase parental/family support to achieve more coordinated approach to attendance, behaviour and wellbeing. Capture pupil and parent voice and feedback in a variety of ways. Ensure pupils can share their views using their method communication and parents can have access to interpreting services as and when needed.

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed every 3 years, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be reviewed by the Co-head teachers. It will be approved by the governing body.

## 10. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Complaints Policy.
- Health and safety policy
- Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement for publication
- Special educational needs (SEN) information report SEND policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Accessibility plan
- Risk assessment

Appendix A :

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| EIA completed by:    | Include name and role  |
| Contributors to EIA: | Include name and role of anyone else involved in writing EIA |
| Date completed:      |  |

|  |
|--|
| POLICY NAME AND PURPOSE  |
|  |
| LAST REVIEW  |
| Include date and person responsible for last review  |
| POLICY STATUS  |
| New or existing  |
| THIS POLICY WILL AFFECT  |
| Add/delete groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pupils</li><li>• Staff</li><li>• Governors/trustees</li><li>• Volunteers</li><li>• Visitors</li><li>• Parents</li></ul> |

## Impact analysis

- Indicate what type of impact this policy will have for each group, and explain why
- If a policy doesn't impact a group, tick the 'neutral impact' column and record this
- Remember that a policy may impact a group in multiple ways. For example, your curriculum policy may positively impact BAME pupils by promoting British values of mutual respect and tolerance, but negatively impact BAME pupils by failing to promote material that highlights a variety of cultures and ethnicities

| GROUP                         | POSITIVE IMPACT | NEUTRAL IMPACT | NEGATIVE IMPACT | WHY WILL THE POLICY HAVE THIS EFFECT?  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|--|
| Sex                           | ✓               |                |                 | <p>Explain the impact you have recorded, and provide evidence for this, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultations</li> <li>• Pupil data</li> <li>• National data, reports, and best practice advice</li> </ul> |
| Race                          |                 |                |                 |  |
| Religion or belief            |                 |                |                 |  |
| Sexual orientation            |                 |                |                 |  |
| Gender reassignment           |                 |                |                 |  |
| Pregnancy or maternity        |                 |                |                 |  |
| Age                           |                 |                |                 |  |
| Disability                    |                 |                |                 |  |
| Marriage or civil partnership |                 |                |                 |  |



| GROUP   | POSITIVE IMPACT | NEUTRAL IMPACT | NEGATIVE IMPACT | WHY WILL THE POLICY HAVE THIS EFFECT? |
|---|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| <p>You could also add non-protected characteristics that have a specific impact in your school, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English as an additional language</li> <li>• Looked-after children</li> <li>• Families with separated parents</li> </ul> |                 |                |                 |                                       |

### INTERSECTIONAL IMPACT

Will this policy impact any groups more because of multiple/combined characteristics?

What will the impact be, and why?

For example, if you're reviewing your:

- **Family leave policy:** if your rules or language around leave arrangement assumes that people having children are married, this could negatively impact unmarried women who are pregnant or have children
- **Menstrual product policy:** if your policy doesn't make sure that all toilets contain menstrual products, this could negatively impact disabled people who use the accessible toilets
- **Supporting pupils with medicines policy:** if your response to allergies relies on pupils carrying and administering their own epi-pens, this could negatively impact younger pupils with allergies who are not able to do this

### Outcomes

#### CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Include details of any internal or external consultation done, and its outcomes

For example:

- We consulted with an anti-racism charity and made several additions they recommended to our policy
- We held a meeting with all staff members to give them a chance to share their views, both through anonymous feedback ahead of time and in person

## CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### FINAL DECISION ON POLICY

Record your decision on what you will do with the policy/process after the results of the EIA. Either:

- Remove the policy (if it's not statutory)
- Adapt the policy to address the equality issues you've identified
- Keep the policy without change

Include details about the evidence used to come to this decision, and why you're doing it.

## Monitoring arrangements

### MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

- Details of how the EIA outcome will be monitored
- Evidence collected / data reviewed
- Policy review schedule
- Any further consultation or stakeholder engagement

### DATE OF NEXT POLICY REVIEW

