

# Tavistock College - Public Sector Equality Duty Policy

Tavistock College's aim is to be of service to our children and all people in our local community, irrespective of their race, religion, ability, gender or ethnic background. To that end, we aim to offer a high- quality and enjoyable learning environment that is underpinned by strong cooperative beliefs and values.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles:

- **All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non- religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- **We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- **We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- **We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- **We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development
- **We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential
- **We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

## 1.0 Purpose of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils, staff, parents and carers or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also "protected characteristics", which are covered by this policy, but not as part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties:

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** or 'general duty'

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

### Two 'specific duties'

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality .
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

## **2.0 Links to other policies and documentation**

Our responsibilities under the Equality Act also inform policy and practice with regards to the school's behaviour, admissions, SEND and anti-bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving the Local Governing Body and Parent Council.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the ways we comply with this are found in our recruitment policy.

## **3.0 What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions, the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils, which is designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- The Principal and Chair of Governors ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the school.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all. This includes the co and extra-curricular provision we make through e.g. the Diversity Group.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief. In principle, this also includes sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity,. Wherever these protected characteristics do apply either in regards to new pupils or their parents / carers, the school will not treat their applications for a place in the school less favourably.

## **4.0 Behaviour, exclusions and attendance**

The school policies on behaviour and exclusion take full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

## **5.0 Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying**

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes

There is guidance for all staff on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the local Governing Body/MAT about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them.

Staff have had awareness training from external providers; Proud2Be, Intercom Trust and Stonewall.

## **6.0 What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups**

We know the needs of our pupils very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements. We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions procedures.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those less progress than their peers.

We collect and analyse data on the school population by gender, pupil premium, ethnicity, EAL, SEND and by year group.

We collect and analyse data on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to our potentially vulnerable groups.

We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.

We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current, but also to future pupils. We will, for example, be sufficiently prepared if Visually Impaired or asylum seeker pupils join our school. We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils. We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving. We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between, for example, disabled and non-disabled people, people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, and girls and boys.

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

The local Governing Body reviews the Accessibility Policy and student Equal Opportunities Policy regularly and makes reasonable adjustments to increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum, to improve the physical environment and to improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils and other users of the school premises.

## **7.0 Positive action**

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support and the deployment of a lead person for Diversity. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

### **What we are doing to foster good relations**

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through Faith, Ethics and Philosophy and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect diversity in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures

- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and promote positive images of people
  - We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences
  - We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events and cultural days

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- Review relevant feedback from the parent questionnaires and consultations, parents-teacher conferences and other formal / informal feedback from parents and carers
- Analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- Review feedback and responses from Pupil Voice and from the House Councils
- Analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Provision Maps
- Gather feedback from Parent Governors, other members of the Governing Body and from the Governing Body's committees

## **8.0 Publishing equality objectives**

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. We produce equality data analysis which informs our discussions about the equality objectives.

Our Equality Objectives for 2018-2022 are:

- We will strive to ensure that all pupils make expected progress, or better across the curriculum, including pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) where applicable
- We will achieve a year on year (over three years) reduction in the progress gap at GCSE between pupils within the school's identified groups (for example, pupil's for whom we receive Pupil Premium) and their peers
- We will increase participation by our potentially vulnerable pupils in after school clubs, extra curricular activities (for example, peripatetic tuition), homework and other extra and co-curricular provision

## **9.0 Monitoring and reviewing objectives**

We will review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the local governing body on progress towards achieving them.

## **10.0 Roles and responsibilities**

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

### **11.1 Local Governing Body**

The local Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

### **11.2 The Principal and leadership team**

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 Principal has day-to-day responsibility for co-

ordinating the implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes.

### **11.3 All teachers and support staff will;**

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- Maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils
- Support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

### **11.4 Visitors**

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers, are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

### **13.0 Equal opportunities for staff**

The school is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability, and in compliance with the law. We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development in line with the school's improvement priorities and performance management policy.

### **14.0 Monitoring and reviewing the policy**

We review the information about equalities in the policy at least every two years and make adjustments as appropriate.