



'Individual Growth, Individual People'

Head Teacher: Mrs M A Tyers

Equality Policy

Reviewed March 2016

EQUALITY POLICY

At Newark Orchard School, we adhere to the Equality Act 2010 to allow staff, students and stakeholders regardless of:

- *age*
- *disability*
- *gender reassignment*
- *race*
- *religions/belief*
- *sex (gender)*
- *sexual orientation*
- *marriage and civil partnership*
- *pregnancy/maternity*

to be treated in a manner that is non-discriminatory and which promotes equality of opportunity.

The school is committed to provide an environment that is enthusiastic and ambitious and will treat students, staff and stakeholders with fairness, respect and honesty.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been developed in response to the Equality Act 2010 and replaces all previous policies relating to Race Equality, Gender Equality and Disability Equality. This policy has been developed to help us to meet the following duties:-

- *Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct.*
- *Advance equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.*
- *Foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.*

As a school we have a statutory duty to tackle homophobic, transphobic and biphobic bullying.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited below, we are guided by the following eight principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as 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
- whatever their sexual identity

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless 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, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities 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, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic *and transphobic* harassment

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that 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 and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

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:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- 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
- Gay people as well as straight

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our 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
- gay people as well as straight

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Newark Orchard School is a split site, area special school which caters for 90 students from 3 - 19 years of age, who present with an extremely diverse range of needs, PMLD, SLD, MLD, ASD & SEBD. We have developed our own alternative provision on site in order to meet the very complex needs of a group of students who *find the main part of school too challenging and their needs are best met within a small discrete group. In addition to the alternative provision there is the Hub, a new provision which meets the needs of students with ASD and anxiety related needs. Some students would have been at risk of non-attendance or permanent exclusion.*

As an area special school, our catchment area is wide, taking students from across the Newark and Sherwood district. Newark presents as an affluent market town, however it does have a significant level of deprivation with some areas having high levels of unemployment, poverty and disaffection with education. There is a large travelling community and Newark has static traveller sites. *Many families have settled into house dwellings within the town and whilst not travelling, continue to embrace their traveller culture. We also meet the needs of students out of our catchment area where appropriate.*

All students have a statement of SEND. The curriculum offer is diverse as we plan for students from low P Levels through to National Curriculum level and above. 8.9% of students are looked after and 37.6% of students claim free school meals.

The school ethos promotes 'Individual Growth for Individual People'. We try to personalise the curriculum wherever possible to support and engage the students with a diverse range of needs, interests and backgrounds.

In all aspects of the curriculum we aim to raise awareness with students of accepting differences and understanding diverse families. Students are made aware through the curriculum about LGBT, disability, culture, race, religions and related human rights issues. As a school, we appreciate that once a young person identifies they must be treated as such, eg a young person assigned as a boy but identifying as a girl MUST be treated as a girl. This is in accordance with the 2010 Equality Act.

We pride ourselves on aiming to support parents/carers to discuss these issues and promote a positive learning environment. In addition, we provide 1:1 and small group sessions to provide students that require more targeted support to develop at an individual rate and take time to work as a school to promote charity work such as Red Nose day, Sport Relief and Children in Need.

We adhere to a coherent Behaviour Policy and record, report and deal with any inappropriate behaviour. Across the school we aim to embed 'British values' throughout the curriculum.

Staff continue to attend training and cascade across the school information and useful teaching tools such as 'stone wall' for example. Courses have been provided by the 'Achievement and Equality Team' at Notts County Council and we continue to seek their professional advice and support when needed.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission statement 'Individual Growth, Individual People' is at the heart of everything we do. It is our passion to meet the very individual needs of our students and enable them to reach their full potential. We work closely with families and other agencies to ensure that all aspects of the students' needs are being met as far as possible. We continue to work with other schools across Newark town, and belong to educational networks across Nottinghamshire. We work closely with the other ten local special schools tackling common issues which are important for SEND students.

THE CURRICULUM/TEACHING AND LEARNING

Equality and diversity will be as embedded as far as is possible in all areas of the curriculum and that pupils will be given opportunities to explore prejudice and discrimination, and to positively explore difference in relation to race/ethnicity, religion/belief, gender, disability etc. Each

subject area will be kept under review, including the resources available. We will make a commitment to ensure resource materials reflect both the diversity of the school, local community and wider society as a whole.

Attainment and achievement data will be collected and this will be used to inform planning and provision to support individuals and groups of pupils.

ETHOS AND ORGANISATION

Equality and diversity principles will run through all our day to day practices and be embedded in all our policies such as:

- Admissions, induction and attendance
- Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- Pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being (linking to anti-bullying and safeguarding)
- Care, guidance and support
- Parental/carer involvement
- Working with the wider community and community cohesion
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions (linking to SEAL)
- Teaching styles and strategies
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Inclusion
- *Staff appraisal*
- *Pay policy*
- *CPD*
- *Grievance/capability*
- *Sex and relationships*

ADDRESSING PREJUDICE AND PREJUDICE-RELATED BULLYING

The school has a legal obligation to eliminate discrimination and harassment and victimisation, as well as the duty to foster positive relations between groups and individuals.

Definition

Newark Orchard School has adopted the definition outlined by the Local Authority:

"A hate incident is any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by the offender's prejudice against people because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or other reason."

Direct discrimination: *Treating someone different due to their protected characteristic.*

Associative discrimination: *Direct discrimination against someone associated with another person with protected characteristics.*

Indirect discrimination: *A rule or policy that applies to all but disadvantages a person or protected characteristic.*

Harassment: Behaviour deemed offensive by the recipients. Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Victimisation: Discrimination against someone because they have supported or made a complaint under the equality act.

Discrimination by perception: Direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic (even if they don't).

Newark Orchard School takes our obligations seriously and the following outlines a list of possible responses to a hate incident/ *discrimination within school*.

- Dealing with the perpetrator by following school behaviour policy and involving parents as appropriate. Judgements will have to be made based on the level of understanding and intent of the behaviour.
- Supporting the victim by counselling/listening and ensuring they are made to feel safe and supported
- Dealing with the impact of hate incidents on the whole school and the community.
- Monitoring of hate incidents and drawing up an action plan to deal with issues arising
- Identifying the behaviour and filling in a Hate incident form
- Notifying the local authority of any Hate incidents

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body is responsible for ensuring the school complies with the legislation, and that the policy, the school's practice and related procedures and any action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed and monitored.

The Head Teacher, senior management and the Governing Body follow three main aims and have due regard to the need to

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

A member of the governing body will have particular responsibility for this area of work. The Head Teacher is responsible for the overall implementation of the policy on a day to day basis and is also responsible for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination; and for ensuring that **all** staff are aware of their responsibilities under the legislation and that they are given appropriate training and support to meet these responsibilities.

All staff have a responsibility to keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work, and must support the ethos of the school through their actions. They should undertake all

their work activities mindful of equalities issues, including planning, assessment, and individual support for pupils and groups of pupils. They should demonstrate an awareness of specific individual needs and promote respect for diversity. They should know how to respond to and deal with any prejudice-related incidents which occur.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that the content of this policy is known by all stakeholders, including governors, staff, parents/carers, and pupils

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Staff across all sections of the community will have their professional development needs met in relation to this agenda. The induction process for all new staff will include reference to this policy.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The impact of the policy will be measured through the collection and analysis of attainment data for all minority groups.

This policy will be reviewed on the usual school cycle every three years.

*Link for Department of Education advice for schools on Equality Act 2010:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>*