

SCHOOL POLICY

Equality & Equal Opportunities Policy

Reviewed by:	Resource Committee
Signed (Governing Body):	<i>C. M. Hodgson</i>
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1. INTRODUCTION

Turton School is a diverse school, where people from many different backgrounds and cultures work together. This school and its partners have a longstanding commitment to celebrating this diversity, promoting good relations between our diverse communities, and ensuring that its services are appropriate and accessible for everyone.

The school welcomes the Equality Act 2010, which states the important role that we all play in tackling inequality and building strong and confident communities. This policy statement describes how the school responds to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

We are committed to the continued development and practice of a positive policy of equal opportunities in employment for all staff, governors and volunteers and in the curriculum for all students, irrespective of age, class, colour, ability, ethnic or national origin, financial status, gender, marital status, political and religious belief and sexual orientation.

We wish to create and maintain a trusting, secure and compassionate environment where everyone can work and study as equals. All members of the school community have responsibilities to promote equality of opportunity, experience and treatment and to challenge stereotypes.

We want to foster mutual respect and tolerance and our aim is for everyone to feel valued within the school.

2. SCOPE & DEFINITION

2.1 The Equality Act 2010 (‘the Act’) sets out the law around equality matters in Great Britain. The Act provides protection against discrimination for the following range of diversity groups and protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex/gender
- Gender reassignment
- Race (including ethnic or national origins; colour; nationality)
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

2.2 In addition to the protected characteristics set out by the Act, the school believes it is also important to consider caring status and socio-economic conditions as part of its work around equality.

2.3 Under the terms of the Equality Act the school has a general duty to show that it has ‘due regard’ to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

3. THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE

3.1 As set out in section 1 and as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty, the school welcomes the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, and the emphasis which this places on local authorities as drivers of equality in their local areas.

3.2 As an employer, we strive to create a culture where diversity is respected and celebrated. We aim to:

- Ensure that all of our policies and processes are fair and help to advance opportunity between staff from all groups.
- Reaffirm that effective leadership and operational delivery on equalities matters is a core competency for the leadership team, and ensure that they are aware of and have the training and information they need to fulfil their obligations under equality legislation.
- Ensure that all staff have the appropriate training to support and respect the differing needs of our diverse communities. This is particularly important for those staff members who are working with vulnerable children, and those at risk of social exclusion.
- Have a workforce which is broadly representative of the local population in the long-term.
- Seek to ensure that our workforce is representative across all levels, including the highest tiers.
- Create an environment in which employees from across the range of protected characteristics feel satisfied with and supported in their work.

3.3 The school's equality duties include eliminating discrimination through the application of a robust policy framework that underpins our roles as employer and service provider.

4. ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

4.1 Our policies are clear about eliminating discrimination in the workplace by ensuring that fair and equal opportunity is afforded to staff from all groups and that individuals have recourse to an objective panel hearing, if necessary, to test any issue of fairness in relation to conduct, treatment or behaviour at work.

4.2 Further, all matters relating to employment terms and conditions are determined in consultation with the recognised trades' unions through a system of collective bargaining, which ensures that matters of collective equity are addressed from inception.

- 4.3 Those policies which are most pertinent to equalities matters are listed below:
- Code of Conduct policy
 - Dismissal and Disciplinary procedure
 - Domestic Abuse policy
 - Flexible Working policy
 - Grievance policy
 - Leave of Absence policy
 - Managing Capability procedures
 - Managing Sickness Absence
 - Parental policies
 - Redundancy policy
 - Whistleblowing policy

5. ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION AS A SERVICE PROVIDER

- 5.1 As a school, our services are based on a firm and objective understanding of children's needs and the recognition that, while we would expect all children to receive an equitable standard of service, different children will have differing needs and requirements.

6. ADVANCING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

- 6.1 As an employer, the school has an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity in employment, both as an individual employer; and as a member of the employer community in Bolton.
- 6.2 Within the workplace, we believe that having an organisational culture where diversity is respected and supported is essential. We aim to provide training around equalities matters for all our managers, built into our package of essential skills and knowledge for those in leadership roles.

7. FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS

- 7.1 The school has an important role in the community, and fostering good relations is a central part of our work to build community and social cohesion in the local area. Engaging effectively with our communities is central to our success, since this helps us to understand the issues which are of importance to our communities.

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We are committed to an employment policy that will:

- ensure that it is clearly stated in all advertisements and application forms that the school is committed to equal opportunities and any selection procedures reflect this.

- provide and review conditions of service which reflect the overall Equality & Equal Opportunities policy of the school
- ensure that members of selection/interview panels are aware of the overall aims of the school's Equality & Equal Opportunities policy and wherever possible, have received appropriate training
- expect and ensure that all employees respect and observe the school's Equality & Equal Opportunities policy, and provide information on procedures to be followed if it is felt discrimination or harassment has occurred
- provide a working environment which acknowledges and encourages the development of equal opportunities
- provide appropriate training on equal opportunities issues
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's Equality & Equal Opportunities policy on a regular basis and review as appropriate.

We are committed to a curriculum that caters for all students. Equal Opportunities here means more than equal access. We ensure that:

- no student is discriminated against in the provision of teaching nor in the allocation to teaching groups.
- no student is discriminated against in the application of standards of behaviour, discipline, dress and appearance.
- staff responsible for careers guidance and the organisation of work experience take specific steps to counter stereo-typing so that all students are encouraged to consider all types of employment. Work experience opportunities are monitored by ethnicity to ensure there is no racial stereotyping in placements. The school provides support to any student who experiences racism or racial harassment whilst on work experience and takes action to ensure that it doesn't recur.
- students are encouraged to approach critically the norms, values and attitudes of society which perpetuate discrimination and to challenge prejudice and discrimination wherever and whenever it occurs.
- we develop an ethos in which diversity and differences are valued.
- we encourage the use of resources which portray the range of beliefs, lifestyles and traditions present in society and which avoid bias and stereotyping.
- methods of assessment are free from bias.
- we monitor the curriculum to evaluate the effectiveness of our equal opportunities.
- Pastoral care takes account of religious and ethnic differences and the experiences and needs of particular groups of students such as travellers and asylum seekers.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- ensure the school complies with Equality Act 2010, including the general and specific duties.
- ensure that the policy is implemented.
- identify a named governor with lead responsibility for racial, homophobia, biphobia and transphobic equality.

The Head Teacher will:

- treat seriously all incidents of racial, homophobia, biphobia and transphobic discrimination and take disciplinary action against staff or students who discriminate.
- identify a member of staff responsible for co-ordinating this equality work and to deal with reported incidents of racism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and through education and knowledge, hopes to teach respect, tolerance and understanding towards different beliefs, cultures and lifestyles.

Breaches of policy will be dealt with as determined by the Head Teacher. If an incident takes place, this will be dealt with as a bullying incident involving restorative practices and will be recorded on the incident file for reporting to governors. Appropriate support is given to victims of racism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia through the pastoral structure and student support centre.

