

Equality Policy

Hartford Church of England High School



Approved by: Full Governing Body

Date: March 2021

Last reviewed on: 18th May 2021

Next review due by: Summer Term 2024

HARTFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

EQUALITY POLICY 2020 - 2024

Mission Statement

At Hartford Church of England High School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents and carers receiving services within the context of a Voluntary Aided Church of England School, irrespective of Age (where appropriate) disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership (where appropriate) race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of students will be monitored by ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and disability and we will use this data to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Hartford we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

1. Equality and the Law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation relating to the Equality Act 2010, although the Act does include some exceptions for schools/academies with a designated religious character, such as Church of England schools and academies:

1a. Exceptions for students and prospective students

- Priority may be given in admissions to members of the Church of England or another religion.
- There are permitted exceptions on how education is provided to students and access is given to other aspects of school life which are not necessarily part of the curriculum. For example, organising visits for students to sites of particular interest to the Church of England school, such as a cathedral, is not discriminating unlawfully by not arranging trips to sites of significance to the faiths of other students.

These exceptions are to allow Church of England schools to conduct themselves in a way which is compatible with their religious ethos. But the Equality Act does not permit less favourable treatment of a student because they do not (or no longer) belong to the Church of England. Nor does it allow schools to discriminate on religious grounds in other respects, such as excluding a student or subjecting a student to any other detriment.

1b. Exception for staff and prospective staff

Schools that were Voluntary Aided schools

- may apply religious criteria when recruiting or dismissing any member of their teaching staff.
- in considering dismissals, may have regard to any conduct that is incompatible with the precepts, or with the upholding of the tenets, of the religion of the school.
- may not apply any religious criteria to any other posts unless there is a genuine occupational requirement.

1c. Acts of worship

There is a general exception to the religion or belief provisions which allows all schools to have acts of worship or other forms of collective religious observance. This means the daily act of collective worship is not covered by the religion or belief provisions. Church of England schools should provide a daily act of collective worship in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England.

The action plan at the end of this Equality Policy outlines the actions Hartford High School will take to meet the general duties detailed below.

2a. Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

2b. Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the School's Special Educational Needs Policy and Disability Equality Scheme.

Definition of disability

The law defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The law also extends the definition of disability as follows:-

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities;
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal duties

The law places a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them.
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

2c. Gender Equality

The law places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between men and women

2d. Sexual Orientation

The law makes provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation; discrimination is unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students.

2e. Community cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between students from different races, faiths/beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

3. Mainstreaming Equality into Policy and Practice

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice in the following ways:-

Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and disability without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our students.

Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on the grounds of a Protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 or socio-economic status .

Exclusions will always be based on the School's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

4. Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspect of equal opportunities relating to staff.

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment within the context of a Voluntary Aided Church of England School.

With the exception of certain posts to which religious criteria may be applied (eg. Headteacher and other senior posts at the discretion of the Appointments Panel) all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the Law.

Employer Duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Our policy is based on the Human Resources policies drafted by Cheshire East Education HR Department, modified in line with permissible exceptions for schools/academies with a designated religious character (see Section 2). These are designed to ensure that decisions in all areas including recruitment, promotion and disciplinary actions are free of discrimination on any of the protected characteristics referred to in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

5. Consultation and Involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, students and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from parents' evening, parent, staff, governor school forum meetings;
- Input from staff meetings/INSET;
- Feedback from School Council, Citizenship Days and Assemblies.
- Issues raised in annual reviews and Progress Days, Individual Education Plans, mentoring and support.
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of Governors

- The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to students, and responsive to their needs based on the protected characteristics referred to in the Equality Act 2010.
- The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of the protected characteristics referred to in the Equality Act 2010.
- The Governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and students.
- The Governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religion and disability.
- The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religion and disability.

The role of the Headteacher (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)

- It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the Governing Body in doing so.
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff: teaching and support staff

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on all Protected characteristics and socio-economic status and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

7. Tackling Discrimination

Harassment on account of any Protected Characteristic or socio-economic status, is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment. This includes discrimination through harassment by Association or Perception.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying trigger investigations generally and incidents are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher/assistant headteacher/Safeguarding lead where necessary. All incidents are reported to the

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Headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the Governing Body and Local Authority on a termly basis.

8. Review of Progress and Impact

This Policy has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review and update the Action Plan (see Appendix A) as part of our annual School Improvement Plan cycle and review the entire Policy every four years.

9. Publishing the Plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish our Single Equality Policy and Action Plan, we will:

- Publish our Plan on the school website;
- Raise awareness of the Plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
- Make sure hard copies are available.

Date: 24.3.21

HARTFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL EQUALITY POLICY/ACCESS PLAN (Equality Act 2010): Updated May 2021

1. Improvements in Access to the Curriculum				
Targets	New Strategies	New Outcome	Time Frame	Persons responsible
IMPROVEMENT IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS OF KEY STAGE 3 AND 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused intervention plan in place across both key stages • Identification of need using standardised tests, teacher assessment and parental information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 7, 8 and 9 continue to make gains in literacy/numeracy. • Continued intervention will provide more focused progress 	ONGOING FOR EACH YEAR GROUP	IP/CEW/CI/TL
PROVIDE ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality first teaching covers majority of pupil support. • Element 2 funding and Element 3 top up funding to provide specific support. • Access arrangements completed by SENDCO team. • Equipment/Tools suitable (laptops, scribe, prompter, reader and extra time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with disabilities will be able to access all aspects of the curriculum 	ONGOING	TL/LL/JW/IP
2. PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENT				
PROVIDE ACCESS TO ALL CURRICULUM AREAS AND EXPERIENCES ON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to ensure that access is available • Lift in Veritas building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students, staff and school users will have access 	ONGOING	PM

THE GROUND FLOOR FOR ALL STUDENTS				
A MEETING ROOM IS ACCESSIBLE FOR DISABLED VISITORS PARENTS PUPILS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting room in Caritas building on ground floor Disabled access and facilities in Veritas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the community Those with access needs are more likely to join us for a range of activities 	ONGOING	IP/LN
3. IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION IN A RANGE OF FORMATS				
TARGETS	NEW STRATEGY	NEW OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE
GIVE INFORMATION TO PARENTS/CARERS ON SPECIFIC NEEDS AND SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to have meetings with parents/carers and outside agencies Use of outside agencies to help with support issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents will be more informed and able to support their children 	ONGOING	TL/IP
RECORD PUPILS' NEEDS ON ICT SYSTEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs are recorded in pupils profile on SIMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to use SIMS to use monitoring systems 	ONGOING	TL/IP
4. GENERAL				

<p>MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH PRIMARY SCHOOLS RE: STUDENT TRANSFER AND MEETING ADDITIONAL NEEDS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assistant SENCO, Pastoral Managers and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to be in regular contact with primaries ● Learning Support Assistants to be involved in transition as soon as possible ● Develop transition plans as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students' needs will be known in advance and appropriate preparation made to ensure success. 	<p>ONGOING ANNUAL REVIEWS</p>	<p>LN/TL/LL/SC</p>
<p>ADDRESS STUDENTS' MEDICAL NEEDS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First Aid training is updated as necessary. ● Training continues ● Procedures are reviewed regularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emergencies and lesser medical problems are dealt with effectively. 	<p>ONGOING</p>	<p>PM</p>