

Equality & Diversity Policy, Information & Equality objectives



Overley Hall
School

Approved by: Support & Scrutiny Board Date: 27th June 2023

Last reviewed: 27th June 2023

Next review due: 26th June 2027 (or before as required)

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Aims.....	4
Legislation.....	4
Definitions.....	5
Admissions.....	5
Education and the curriculum.....	6
Accessibility.....	6
Employer duties.....	6
Role & responsibilities.....	6
Eliminating discrimination.....	8
Advancing equality of opportunity.....	8
Fostering good relations.....	9
Equality considerations in decision-making.....	10
Equality objectives.....	11
Monitoring.....	11
Links with other policies.....	12

Introduction.

Overley Hall School is an independent special school supporting up to 24 young people between the ages of 8 and 19 years of age who have complex learning needs. These complex needs include profound and multiple learning difficulties. Our young people come from Local Authorities across the UK and from a variety of socio-economic, cultural and diverse backgrounds.

Our school has been built and adapted to meet the needs of all our student population with the Wellingtonia Children's home (physically attached to Overley Hall School) and an Independent Learning Lounge (again on site) being used to support learners who at times find attending main school too difficult. Class sizes are kept small to support those who find larger classes in other schools too difficult. For further details on our offer that is built to enhance the experiences and education of our learners please [click here](#).

This policy outlines the commitment of the Proprietor, Headteacher and staff of Overley Hall School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school this means, not simply treating everybody the same, but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, celebrating and valuing the equal opportunity achievements and strengths of all members of the school community.

This policy is available on the school website and can be provided free of charge on request. This and all school policies can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

We are committed to promoting and developing inclusion and equality in all its functions and will seek to do this by:

- ✿ Sharing our commitment to equality and diversity to all members of the school community

- ✿ Ensuring all staff are aware of the aims of this policy and that they are embedded during all teaching and communications.
- ✿ Demonstrating our zero-tolerance attitude towards discrimination by taking all allegations seriously.

Aims

- ✿ to create a fair and just school community that promotes social inclusion, community cohesion and equality that respects diversity and challenges and acts upon discrimination and equality.
- ✿ to ensure our schools' vision, ethos and values of inclusion, equality and diversity shines through all that we do and offer so that all feel a sense of belonging and value.
- ✿ to ensure there is no discrimination or other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- ✿ to foster good relationships across all characteristics between people who do and do not share it.
- ✿ to publish our equality objectives and information
- ✿ to provide a secure environment so that all our young people can thrive and achieve all the outcomes in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- ✿ prepare our young people for a life in a diverse and inclusive society where they feel part of the local, regional, national and international community
- ✿ provide and promote positive information about the diversity of UK Society

Legislation

Equality Act (2010) and all schools

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

Children & Families Act (2014)

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)

UN Convention of Rights of People with Disabilities (2006)

Human Rights Act (1998)

Definitions.

Discrimination can be:

- ✿ **Direct** – when a person is treated less favourably than others because of their (or their families) actual or perceived protected characteristic.
- ✿ Indirect – when a provision, criterion or practice disadvantages people on the grounds of a protected characteristic and can't be justified as proportionate in achieving a legitimate aim.
- ✿ **Victimisation** – when an individual has exercised their rights (or that they intend to) and is treated less favourably as a direct result. It also applies to person who is supporting (or that they intend to support) another person who is exercising their rights under legislation.
- ✿ **Harassment** – when unwanted conduct is related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating a hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual
- ✿ **Disability**- that includes direct or indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by disability.

The protected characteristics are:

- [age](#)
- [disability](#)
- [gender reassignment](#)
- [marriage and civil partnership](#)
- [pregnancy and maternity](#)
- [race](#)
- [religion or belief](#)
- [sex](#)
- [sexual orientation](#)

Admissions

Overley Hall School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School Admission's Policy. The school admits pupils irrespective of any protected characteristic.

Education and the curriculum

To enable our learners to develop make the most progress they can each learner has:

- ✿ Individualised targets that are worked upon daily
- ✿ Access to therapists that tailor programs to reduce any barriers to learning
- ✿ Access to all areas of the curriculum, services and facilities irrespective of any protected characteristic (following considerations in regards of health and safety).
- ✿ Access to education in a multicultural, anti-racist environment, where the curriculum, assemblies, the PSHE and SMSC curriculum and external speakers promote an understanding and appreciation of other faiths, races and cultures.

Accessibility

The school and Coach House are fully accessible (including wheelchair access) for the school community and visitors. The curriculum is broad and balanced with personalisation for each learner. Information in school is presented in a variety of formats to increase accessibility for our learners.

The School Improvement Plan has accessibility considered throughout.

Employer duties.

As an employer and during recruitment we aim to ensure that we eliminate all discrimination and harassment in our employment practice.

Role & responsibilities

All adult members of the school community are charged with providing our learners with inclusive and accessible opportunities to

- ✿ learn and achieve
- ✿ develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally
- ✿ to prepare for adulthood and the opportunities and challenges that this may bring.

All school staff must:

- ✿ Positively model inclusive behaviour
- ✿ Actively challenge any forms of discrimination, victimization, harassment or bullying.
- ✿ Promote an inclusive curriculum by identifying and challenging any bias and stereotyping within the school curriculum and school culture.
- ✿ Develop their knowledge of inclusive behaviour so that they can identify any potential bias or discrimination.
- ✿ Have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out.

The headteacher will:

- ✿ Ensure that this policy is effectively implemented.
- ✿ Ensure that all staff act as role models of inclusive behaviour and practice
- ✿ Challenge any form of victimisation, discrimination, harassment or bullying that they witness or is reported to them.
- ✿ Ensure staff are trained and sufficiently aware of equality and diversity.
- ✿ Have in place procedures to deal effectively and take appropriate action with any reported incidents of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying
- ✿ Ensure all visitors and contractors are aware of and comply with this policy.
- ✿ Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- ✿ Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to the Support and Scrutiny Board.

The support and scrutiny board will:

- ✿ Positively model inclusive behaviour
- ✿ Ensure that the school policies and procedures are monitored in light of this policy and the school's wider equality obligations
- ✿ Be involved, together with the head teacher, with serious breaches of this policy.

- ✿ 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 headteacher

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 annually.

The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and board members aware of these as appropriate.

Designated member of staff – Head Teacher Bev Doran

Equality and Diversity is addressed at each full board meeting (SAS) and is set as a standing agenda item, this is also a standing agenda item across the DSL and Teacher/Tutor meetings.

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 which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. ensuring that activities are available to all learners rather than those in specific classes (following a risk assessment))
- ✿ Taking steps to meet the particular needs of staff and learners who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils/staff 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/activities/enrichment)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- ✿ regularly monitor the performance of different groups, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We will use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans as necessary.
- ✿ Resources are available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that they may benefit from them
- ✿ Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying – at present we have none)
- ✿ Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

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:

- ✿ Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, SMSC, 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. We will also invite external speakers to contribute
- ✿ Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- ✿ Working 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

Equality considerations in decision-making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

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:

- ✿ Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- ✿ Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

The school keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) 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 included as part of the risk assessment.

Equality objectives

Objective 1

Undertake an analysis of recruitment data and trends with regard to race, gender and disability and report on this to the SAS Board.

Objective 2

Carry out an equality and diversity audit of provision. Involve all education staff in this process. Outcomes to be actioned through SIP.

Objective 3

Ensure all staff and SAS Board members are given Equality and Diversity Training including new member of staff through their induction period. Ensure staff involved in recruitment and selection are provided with training on equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Training evaluation data will show that 100% of those attending have a good understanding of the legal requirements.

Objective 4

Include the 'Two Ticks' positive about people with disabilities symbol on all job adverts, application forms and information by January of next year, to help address the under-representation of people with disabilities in the school workforce. School will endeavour to apply 'the disability confident' guarantee during the recruitment process.

Monitoring

The headteacher will update the equality information we publish at least every year.

This document will be reviewed by the headteacher at least every 4 years.

This document will be approved by the Support & Scrutiny Board.

Links with other policies.

School improvement and accessibility plan

School Admissions Policy

Safer Recruitment Policy

Induction Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy