Huish Episcopi Academy
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

Equality Policy

Equality Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out Huish Episcopi Academy's approach to promoting equality, as defined within the Equality Act (2010). We understand equality to mean treating everyone with equal dignity and worth valuing their particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic circumstances. We further understand that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but are differentiated, as appropriate to take account of differences (of life-experience, outlook, background and the barriers and disadvantages which people may face), in order to ensure equal opportunity for all.

We recognise that inequality can be experienced in a variety of ways such as through outcomes, access to services, the degree of independence needed to make decisions affecting lives and inequality of treatment, including in relation to employment, through direct or indirect discrimination or disadvantage imposed by other individuals, groups, institutions, or systems, intentionally or inadvertently.

The Equality Act's provision covers all aspects of Academy life such as the treatment of:

- students and prospective students
- parents and carers
- employees and governors
- local community
- visitors

The Equality Act 2010 has simplified anti-discrimination laws by having a single equality Act. This makes it easier for people to understand and comply with the law. The 2010 Act has also strengthened protection in some situations.

The Act covers nine protected characteristics, which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act make it unlawful to treat someone differently, both through direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation and by failing to make reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

Since 06 April 2011 all public bodies including:

- local authorities
- schools, colleges and other state-funded educational settings including academies

have been bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Age applies to a school as an employer but not with regard to the treatment of students and prospective students.

We are bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations

The general duty is supported by specific duties; these are to:

- publish information which demonstrates our compliance with the duty to have due regard for the three aims of the general duty and to annually repeat this
- prepare and publish our specific and measurable objectives to achieve the three aims of the duty and undertake this no later than in four years' time

Aims and Values

The Academy's aim is to provide equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards.

The core values on which the policy is based include:

- overcoming economic and social disadvantage
- a culture of respect for others
- promoting equality by recognising and celebrating differences between people
- a community where students are well prepared for life in a diverse society

Good Practice includes:

Teaching and Learning

- All students have access to the mainstream curriculum
- Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which students feel all contributions are valued
- Teaching is responsive to students' needs, with the teacher taking positive steps to include all groups or individuals
- Student grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching group are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender and background
- Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that students appreciate the value of working together. All students are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem-solving tasks
- Teachers encourage student to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning

- Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster students' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities
- Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of students, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the Academy

Curriculum

Curriculum planning takes account of ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all students. The curriculum builds on students' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- Students learning English as an additional language
- Students from minority ethnic groups
- Students who are gifted and talented
- Students with special educational needs and disabilities
- Students who are looked after by the local authority
- Students who are at risk of disaffection and suspension

The Academy monitors and evaluates effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for students of all backgrounds. Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity.

All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students. The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages students to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes

Extra-curricular activities and special events (e.g. productions) cater for the interests and capabilities of all students and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

Attainment and Progress

- The Academy has equally high expectations of all students and is committed to encouraging and enabling all students to achieve the highest standards
- The Academy recognises and values all forms of achievement
- Student attainment and progress are monitored by ethnicity and evaluated to identify trends and patterns of underachievement
- Action is taken to remove disparities between different groups of students
- All methods of assessment are monitored to ensure that they are, as far as possible, free of cultural or linguistic bias
- All students are appropriately supported in assessments so that they are able to show fully both what they know and what they can do
- Particular attention is paid to identifying and meeting the needs of groups that are particularly disadvantaged

Personal Development and Pastoral Care

- The pastoral support system takes account of special educational needs and disabilities statuses, religious and ethnic differences, and the experiences and needs of refugee and asylum-seeker children
- The Academy provides appropriate support for EAL students and encourages them to use their home and community languages
- The Academy takes into account, and meets the needs of, Traveller and Forces students
- All students are provided with appropriate career advice and guidance
- Work experience providers are asked to demonstrate their commitment to Equal Opportunities. Placements are monitored
- Support is given to victims and perpetrators of harassment and unacceptable behaviour. External agencies are used, where appropriate

Behaviour, Discipline and Suspensions

- Our procedures for disciplining students and managing behaviour are fair and applied appropriately
- It is recognised that special educational needs and disabililties and cultural background may affect behaviour. The Academy takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour
- All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline
- Suspensions and attendance are monitored and action taken in order to reduce gaps between different groups of students
- Students, staff and parents are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic, disablist or potentially damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable and will be challenged and sanction as appropriate

Admissions and Attendance

- The admissions policy and criteria are equally open to students from all racial groups
- The admission process is monitored to ensure that it is administered consistently and fairly
- Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance. This includes staff as well as students
- Student attendance is monitored according to vulnerable groups

Staff Recruitment

- The Academy adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and United Learning guidelines
- Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the Academy is informed of the contents of this policy. New staff are familiar with it as part of their induction programme
- The skills of staff, including non-teaching and part-time staff, are recognised and valued
- All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge
- Staff information and regular professional development activities are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy
- Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community
- Ethnic Monitoring of Employees: we routinely monitor job applications and staff by grade and by ethnic groups

Partnership with Parents/Carers and the Community

- Progress reports to parents/carers are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents/carers have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue
- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the Academy
- Information and meetings for parents/carers are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups
- The Academy works in partnership with parents/carers and the community to address specific incidents and to develop positive attitudes to difference
- The Academy takes steps to encourage the involvement and participation of underrepresented groups of parents/carers and sections of the community
- Information material for parents/carers is easily accessible in user-friendly language and is available in languages and formats other than English, as appropriate
- Informal events are designed to include the whole community and at times may target minority or marginalised groups
- Our premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community

The Academy's Overall Approach to Promoting Equality

Roles and Responsibilities

Within Huish Episcopi, all staff and governors at the Academy are responsible to ensure the Academy meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Huish Episcopi Governors are responsible for:

- making sure the Academy complies with current equality legislation
- making sure this policy and the single equality scheme are properly implemented
- making sure related procedures are followed

The Principal is responsible for:

- making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, students and their parents/carers know about it
- making sure its procedures are followed
- producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination

All Academy staff are responsible for:

- promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the classroom
- modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- promote equality and avoid discrimination against anyone

- keep up to date with the law on discrimination and take training and learning opportunities

Students are responsible for:

- supporting the Academy's equality ethos
- sharing concerns or issues with a member of staff
- keeping equality and diversity issues on the School Council agenda

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- supporting the Academy's equality ethos
- sharing concerns or issues with senior staff

Visitors are responsible for:

- following our expectations regarding equality

A Cohesive Community

The Academy seeks to:

- promote understanding and engagement between communities
- encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community
- understand and respond to the needs and hopes of all our communities
- tackle discrimination
- increase life opportunities for all
- ensure that learning, teaching and the curriculum explore and address issues of diversity

Procurement and Contractors

The Academy will take steps to ensure that when we buy services from another organisation, that organisation will comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in selection during any tendering process. We will also ensure that any equipment we procure will comply with equality legislation. Any contractors visiting the Academy will be made aware of this Equality Statement on arrival and will be required to operate within the requirements.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Assessing Impact

The Academy's Equality Policy is supported by a Single Equality Scheme and includes targets for promoting equality. The policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure that it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision-making.

The Principal will provide monitoring reports for review by the Governing Body annually. This policy links to other policies and in general the principles of equality will apply to all other Academy policies.

Concerns or Complaints

In the first instance a senior member of staff should be contacted. If issues or concerns remain unresolved these should be raised in accordance with the Academy's Concerns and Complaints Policy.

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