

The Shrubbery School

A Policy for Equality

The Equality Act (2010) redefines Equality by bringing together all existing legislation on Equality into a single act. The Equality Act introduced the concept of a Protected Characteristic. This replaces the Equality Strands of previous legislation, by giving legal protection from discrimination on the grounds of the following sets of characteristics:

- Gender
- Marital status and civil partnership
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Transgender
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Religion and Belief
- Sexual Orientation

Additional responsibilities for public bodies are set out in section 149 of the Equality Act. This places a general duty on public bodies when exercising their functions to pay due regard to equality and to meet the three aims of the Equality Act which are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our policies on equality are now contained within this single Equality Policy to create a coherent framework for promoting equality and diversity within our school. We have identified a set of priorities to promote equality, inclusion and community cohesion. In the appendix is a plan of action to address these priorities over the next three years.

Diversity and a national context

All schools have duties to promote race, disability and gender equality. The general duty to promote race equality means that we must have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote quality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.
- As a school community ensure due regard is given to British Values with its reinforcement of democracy and equality.

The general duty to promote disability equality means that we must

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate disability-related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourable than other people

The general duty to promote gender equality means that we must have regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and
- Promote quality of opportunity between men and women

Schools have a duty to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socio-economic groups. However, we have incorporated our priorities into our Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan to make it easier to monitor our progress and performance in meeting the requirements of this duty. Although there are no equivalent promotional duties in relation to age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, we must ensure that we do not discriminate on these grounds. This Scheme includes our priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment for these equality areas.

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