



Newport Girls' High School

Equality Policy

INTRODUCTION

Newport Girls' High School recognises and accepts its responsibility as set out in The Equality Act (2010) and is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, faith, or socio-economic background.

We have 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 is monitored according to the various sub-groups represented in our community and we 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 Newport Girls' High School we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all staff, governors, students and visitors to the school.

POLICY

Equality in 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:

Equal opportunities for students

a) Teaching and learning

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

- use contextual data to ensure that the support we provide for individuals and groups is effective and appropriate;
- monitor achievement data by ethnicity, disability and other identified groups and take action where there are 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 race, gender, disability and sexual orientation, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;

- provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child(ren)'s education;
- encourage the discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning.

b) Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions in respect of equality in order to avoid any potential adverse impact.

Equal opportunities for 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. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

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

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, age and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR), additional payments or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- monitoring recruitment, retention and responsibility allocation;
- continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Equality and the law

The Equality Act (2010) introduced a single equality duty for all public sector organisations including schools: known as the "public sector equality duty".

The public sector duty requires all schools to show how they are meeting the aims of the Equality Act by giving due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This Equality Policy and Plan is our response to demonstrate a) that we comply with the duty to have due regard for the three aims above and b) have specific and measurable objectives which will be pursued over the coming years, to achieve the three aims.

In particular, the action plan at the end of this Equality Policy and Plan outlines the actions Newport Girls' High School will take to meet the general duties detailed below.

a) Race equality

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.

Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare and publish an Equality Policy and Plan (see also Appendix A) which includes our written policy for race equality;
- assess the impact of our policies, including this Plan, on students, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these students;
- monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such students, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

b) Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Plan.

i) Definition of disability

Disability legislation has defined 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 definition of disability has also been extended 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;
- 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.

ii) Legal duties

Legislation 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 Policy and Plan (see also Appendix A) which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- review and revise this Plan every three years.

c) Gender equality

Legislation 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 between female and male students and between women and men and transgender people.

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.

Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare and publish an Equality Policy and Plan (see also Appendix A) which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- review and revise this Plan every three years.

d) Sexual orientation

Legislation makes discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on the grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students.

e) Age discrimination

Legislation makes discrimination on the grounds of age unlawful. For schools this has particular relevance in the appointment and treatment of staff.

f) 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.

Tackling Discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

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 student's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a Head of Year/Senior Leadership Team where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Headteacher, recorded on SIMS and reported annually to the governing body.

a) What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socioeconomic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident was defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

b) Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- bringing discriminatory material into school;
- verbal abuse and threats;
- incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc.;
- refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

c) Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to students and staff how they report incidents (Roles and Responsibilities below). All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT

It is a requirement that the development of this Policy and 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 Policy and Plan:

- feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' evenings, report acknowledgements and review days;
- input from staff surveys and through staff meetings/INSET;
- feedback from the School Council, PSHE lessons, and whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school;
- issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans, mentoring and support;
- feedback at governing body meetings and via the SEN and other link Governors.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a) The role of governors

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this Policy and Plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to all people, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender, sexual orientation and disability.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- 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 the person's socio-economic background, race, sexual orientation or disability.
- The governing body ensures that no person is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their socio-economic background, race, sexual orientation or disability.

b) The role of the Headteacher

- It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Policy and Plan and they are supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy and Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment 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.

c) The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy and Plan.

- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender, sexual orientation and disability, 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 non-teaching staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents or to report such incidents to a member of the SLT.
- All staff will ensure that their behaviour is fully inclusive of all members of the school community.

REVIEW AND PUBLICATION

Review of progress and impact

The Equality Policy and Plan 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 progress against our Equality Policy and Plan annually and review the entire Plan and accompanying action plan on a three-year cycle.

We make regular assessments of students' learning and use this information to track student progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity and disability, to ensure that all groups of students are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

Publishing the plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish an Equality Scheme we will:

- publish our Policy and Plan on the school website;
- raise awareness of the Policy and Plan through school assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
- make sure hard copies are available on request.

Linked documents

Behaviour Policy
The Equality Act 2010
SEN Policy
Accessibility Plan