



BLYTHE BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL
SIXTH FORM
A FOUNDATION TRUST SCHOOL

Statutory Policy

On

Equal Opportunities

Drafted by:

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Date of Approval by Governing Body:

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Signed By Chair of Governors:

Review date:

30th March 2023

Person(s) Responsible for Day to Day Management:

Susan Owen

Person Responsible for Review:

Susan Owen

1. Aims:

Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form is committed to equality of opportunity and aims to be a school where everyone:

- is respected and respects others;
- takes an active part in the life of the school;
- achieves to their potential;
- develops skills essential to life;
- exercises choice

Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form, welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination (either direct or indirect), harassment and 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 those who do not share it

We understand the principle of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity. Therefore we will promote the rights of all individuals to respect and equality through our ethos, processes and curriculum.

We will, on every occasion, oppose all forms of prejudice and support positive attitudes towards a multi-cultural society.

We recognise that a protected characteristic under the 2010 Act covers the nine groups listed below:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

We:

- Believe that all learners are of equal value
- Recognise, welcome and respect diversity
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of belonging
- Observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development
- Aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers
- Consult and involve widely about our practice and when making significant change
- Strive to ensure that society will benefit from our work in this area

Therefore Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form will, through its ethos, processes and curriculum, attempt to ensure that all students and employees overcome challenges, thrive and succeed.

The school will implement national agreements and guidance on equal opportunities, race relations, sex discrimination, equal pay, disability discrimination and child protection.

We will publish this statement, equality information and equality objectives as required by the 2010 Act on the school website.

2. The legal framework and other supporting policies

2.1 The following legislation informs Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form's equality guidance:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- SEN Code of Practice 2014

2.2 Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form recognises that discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfairly or less favourably than another person. There are various ways in which discrimination can be said to occur under the Equality Act 2010:

2.3 **Direct discrimination:** where an individual or group receives less favourable treatment with some unjustifiable reason because of their race, gender, age, disability, religion, belief, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, maternity or trade union activity (all of which are considered 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010).

2.4 **Indirect discrimination:** applying unjustifiable requirements and conditions which have a disproportionate impact on an individual of a particular group.

2.5 **Discrimination by perception:** where a person is treated less favourably and is thought to have a protected characteristic even when they do not.

2.6 **Discrimination by association:** where a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic.

2.7 **Victimisation:** where an employee or prospective employee is treated badly because they have done something in relation to discrimination legislation e.g. raising a grievance or supporting a colleague doing so.

2.8 **Harassment:** unwanted conduct on the grounds of the various protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, which violates a person's dignity, creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, and may be intentional or unintentional. Harassment may occur as a result of persistent treatment or an isolated incident.

2.9 Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment from employees, students, parents or the public.

3. Ethos

Our school is a Rights' Respecting School which promotes the core values of determination, courage, friendship, excellence, respect, inspiration and equality. As such we strive to:

- protect and safeguard all children
- ensure a welcoming, secure and comfortable environment for all members and visitors
- challenge the notion of fixed abilities and promote the development of the untapped potential of all
- celebrate the achievement of all students
- understand the significance of progress from starting points as key performance indicators
- display the work of students of varying aptitudes and backgrounds
- promote the equal opportunities policy in assemblies, meetings and displays and through our work as a Rights' Respecting School.
- create a sense of belonging and involvement for all students, parents, adult workers and community partners
- deploy resources to secure equality of opportunity

4. Curriculum

We believe that all students have the potential to achieve highly and learn effectively. This confidence in the learning capacity of all students will be reflected in curriculum design and delivery.

The curriculum will be both broad and balanced. A range of core learning will be experienced by all students. Students will also have the opportunity to select some areas of study through our pathways during Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 according to their individual learning needs and interests. In this way students will experience a personalised curriculum.

The curriculum will, through its range of experiences and our work as a Rights' Respecting School, promote respect and understanding of diverse and different cultures and religions. Our curriculum is inclusive. The school will provide support, within the resources that it possesses, to:

- ensure access and achievement in core and personalised learning for students who have Special Educational Needs or find difficulty with certain aspects of their learning programmes.
- provide language development tuition and/or support for those students who have English as an Additional Language. These students will also have access to the whole school curriculum.
- ensure that the most able students are challenged in lessons, experience curriculum enrichment and, like all our students, have their particular attainment monitored on a regular basis
- support the progress of vulnerable students with cognisance of the particular needs of students who are; looked after, asylum seekers, young carers and those in receipt of the Pupil Premium

5. Challenging prejudice, discrimination and harassment

- Equality issues will be raised in a clear and consistent way with students enabling them to challenge prejudiced attitudes and behaviour
- The pastoral needs of all sections of the school community will be understood and responded to
- Clear procedures will be implemented to deal with racial, sexual or other harassment or discriminatory behaviour or bullying
- Incidents will be recorded and monitored in order to ensure and continually improve the effectiveness of action
- These procedures will be informed by and inform school behaviour and anti-bullying Policies

Staff will strive for consistency in handling both the promotion of positive behaviour and responding to abusive behaviour

Challenging discrimination and harassment will, when appropriate, include sensitive discussing addressing of deep-rooted prejudices of perpetrators

6. Students, parents and carers

The school will strive to:

- develop a strong sense of self-esteem and resilience and determination in all students
- recognise and celebrate the achievement of all students
- promote students' and parents' understanding of our equality policies and practices and secure their commitment to them
- promote and disseminate our equal opportunities philosophy to parents
- promote parental involvement in their children's education and encourage their regular participation of all parents in celebratory, consultative, information gathering and social events
- develop and implement a range of methods to gather student and parent opinion and take serious consideration of the trends and ideas expressed

7. Staff

- The Headteacher and senior leaders will promote key messages to staff, parents and pupils about equality, what is expected of them and can be expected from the school
- The Headteacher will ensure that the whole school community receives adequate training to meet the needs of delivering equality and will regularly assess staff training needs
- The school's appointment and human resource procedures will implement all aspects of good practice in equal opportunities and safeguarding
- There will be particular attention paid to ensure that all candidates for positions have equal access to selection criteria and to ensure useful feedback for all candidates who desire it
- The Headteacher and governors will monitor the school's current staffing profile with regards to ethnicity, gender and disability
- All staff are expected to demonstrate a commitment to the principles and implementation of the school's equal opportunities policy. This includes a responsibility to record and report discriminatory incidents and any incidents of sexual harassment

8. Governors

Governors have a duty to ensure that all policies are regularly monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring is an essential aspect of this policy, as it should provide important information by which the school can measure its performance against its aims and objectives. Statistical

information can also enable the governors and Headteacher to detect where potential or actual imbalances exist and to take steps to correct them.

The governing body:

- has overall responsibility for implementation of all policies through the offices of the Headteacher and staff
- will involve and engage the whole school community in identifying and understanding equality barriers and setting objectives to address these
- supports and monitors the school's contribution to the development of community cohesion and the promotion of actions to combat extremism
- should monitor the diversity of its own composition and consider action to ensure it reflects the diversity of the local community
- should ensure its involvement in school self-evaluation, the school development plan and vision for the future will ensure its sub committees incorporate equal opportunities priorities into their work
- should ensure regular liaison between themselves and all groups in the school who are addressing or should address equal opportunities concerns
- holds responsibility for the school's compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (as it did for the, replaced, Race Relations Act, Sex Discrimination Act and Disability Discrimination Act) and should ensure, through monitoring, that this is the case.

9. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

9.1 A range of information, including quantitative and qualitative data, will be used. It will include: Data from all of the protected characteristics of gender, age, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation (where appropriate data is obtainable):

- Student attainment.
- Access to the curriculum and subject areas.
- Fixed Term and Permanent Suspensions.
- Exclusions from areas of the curriculum, including trips and extracurricular activities.
- Sanctions and rewards.
- Staff recruitment, retention and career development.
- Analysis of discrimination related incidents.
- Ofsted reports on educational provision and standards.
- Consultation with parents, students and governors.

9.2 Data will be used to inform planning, identify priorities and to ensure Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form's commitment to equal opportunities goes from policy to practice in order that we improve outcomes for all of our learners.

9.3 The data from the above monitoring is to be produced and reviewed termly by the Senior Leadership Team and reported to Governing Body sub-committees and then in a report to the full Governing Body

10. Linked policies

To underpin the values and ethos of Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form and our intent to ensure that students are treated equally, the following policies are also a support to the Equalities Procedure:

- Safeguarding Policy
- SEN Policy
- Culture & Ethos (Behaviour for Learning) Policy
- Anti-Bullying
- Admissions Policy
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Educational Visits

Appendix A to Equal Opportunities Policy

Discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation is illegal. However, for the school community, discrimination is also unacceptable on any of the other grounds referred to in this policy statement. Failure to comply with the policy will be fully and promptly investigated using the appropriate procedures.

There are four ways in which discrimination may occur:

1. **Direct discrimination:** This means treating someone less favourably than others would be treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex etc
2. **Indirect discrimination:** This means applying a requirement or condition which cannot be justified to all groups but which has a disproportionately adverse effect on one group because the proportion of that group which can comply is smaller than the proportion of the group(s) which can comply with it.
3. **Victimisation:** This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than other persons would be treated because that person has done a 'protected act' under the Equal Pay Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act or Employment Equality Regulations, for example, by bringing forward proceedings or giving evidence or information.
4. **Harassment:** Harassment can take many forms, from the most obvious abusive remarks to extremely subtle use of power. As with unfair or unlawful discrimination, harassment can be intentional or unintentional. However, the key issue is not simply the intention of the offender but the impact of the behaviour on the person receiving it.

Harassment may involve any of the following:

- physical contact or violence;
- offensive humiliating and intimidating remarks or actions;
- exclusion from participation in job-related or classroom-related discussions, training or social or other events;
- unfair work allocation;
- unjust or excessive or humiliating criticism of performance;
- offensive signs or notices;
- graffiti;
- repeated demands or requests for sexual favours.

These are merely examples and not an exhaustive list. Whatever the form, the school will provide support for any member of the school community, student or staff member who feels threatened or isolated because of such actions.

Appendix B to Equal Opportunities Policy

The governors and school will:

- ensure that job applicants who are deemed to be medically fit to perform the job for which they have applied, are not denied an offer of work solely because they are HIV positive. In arriving at the decision, the school's normal recruitment criteria will be observed including the normal medical procedures;
- ensure, where possible, that resources are available to support employees or students with AIDS or other major health problems associated with HIV infection. The school's normal rules and procedures regarding ill health will apply in such cases. Equally the school will make appropriate arrangements for the provision of counselling (i.e. by referral to external agencies);
- give positive consideration to applications for unpaid leave for those with responsibility for caring for people with AIDS-related conditions in accordance with carers' leave arrangements;
- treat any breaches of confidentiality as a serious matter to be dealt with in accordance with the normal disciplinary (or other appropriate) procedure;
- provide appropriate training in relation to AIDS in order to combat fears and prejudice and to enable the school community as a whole to function without risk to health.