

EQUALITIES POLICY



GREY COURT

SCHOOL

An outstanding experience

Date last reviewed	November 2024
Committee Responsible	Full Governing Body
Designated member of staff	Richard Clements
Date of next review:	November 2025

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Grey Court School celebrates diversity. It is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination in all its forms. The school monitors its equality policy in line with protected characteristics:

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

Our core values of achievement, respect, working cooperatively, participation, high expectations and hard work form the basis for excellence and future success for all. Each student and staff member is valued as an individual and as a member of the school community.

We are committed to equal opportunities and by this we mean that the school, its curriculum and all aspects of school life are open to all regardless of race, religion, belief, disability, gender, sexual orientation or economic background.

EQUALITIES POLICY

This Equalities Policy is a statement of good practice that covers all aspects of Grey Court School's activities and the non-discriminatory manner in which it deals with all members of the school community.

The purpose of the document is to make a statement of principles and to establish specific areas where these principles are translated into practice. We recognise our obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to promoting the equality and diversity of all those we work with especially our employees, pupils, young people and visitors. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, bullying and harassment and will make every effort to comply with the requirements of the Act and its subsequent provisions. This policy and all associated procedures apply to all staff (including volunteers and students on placement), young people and visitors. An action plan for the implementation of policy and practice is outlined, as are the monitoring procedures for evaluation.

A Statement of Principles

Grey Court School aims to provide equality of access and equality of opportunity for all students irrespective of their class or social background, race or sex, sexual orientation, ability and medical status (including HIV). We are proud of, and value, the diverse backgrounds of our students. We believe as a comprehensive school every child has the right to a challenging and stimulating education. We also believe that the curriculum itself should reflect the cultural diversity of our society as a whole, so that all students grow up with an awareness of the contribution made by other cultures to that society, even if they have not directly encountered them at school.

To promote these principles the following words make up our equal opportunities statement and are to be found in our classrooms:

At Grey Court School every student matters. We believe in respecting differences and celebrating the various cultures which make up our special learning community

Aims

- To ensure that all governing bodies and staff are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010.
- To uphold the principles of the Human Rights Act specifically – Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right). Article 8: a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity. Article 14: to protect the rights and freedoms set out in the Act without discrimination. Protocol 1, Article 2: to protect the right to education.
- To ensure that all staff, students, parents and carers know and understand what the policy is and what they should do if discrimination arises.
- All members of the school community will challenge and act on all forms of discrimination that are witnessed or reported using school systems and procedures.
- All students are prepared through their school experience for life in a culturally diverse society, free from discrimination and prejudice.

Objectives

- To ensure no person at Grey Court School is treated less favourably because of their **race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation or because they are pregnant or entitled to paternity leave. (protected characteristics)**
- To work alongside **Strathmore School** to promote collaboration and friendships between students in a mainstream school and students with profound learning difficulties who are educated in specialist provision
- To monitor and respond to any homophobic bullying / biphobic bullying/ transphobic bullying by categorising this form of discrimination separately, in same way as racist bullying is logged on SIMS.
- To ensure all staff and students are consulted regarding contents of our equality policy, including using student collegium, and that training enables the school to achieve its objectives.
- To ensure the school website makes it clear what our policy is and how we deliver its objectives to the local community through the equality page on the school website.
- To celebrate diversity in our school through a range of school events acknowledged in our school calendar such as Diversity evening, religious celebrations and festivals, and highlighting key events in history to inspire and raise awareness eg; Stephen Lawrence Day, Commonwealth day and Pride month.
- To ensure all SEND students have equal access to curriculum and extra-curricular activities
- To listen to pupils and parents views on pupil harassment providing clear channels of communication in line with new guidance from OFSTED
- To carefully consider how we support our pupils and students with protected characteristics so that where necessary we will take positive actions that are proportionate in order to meet their specific needs.
- To, wherever, possible, make it a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people.

Definitions

- Discrimination: any forms of behaviour, practices or institutions which disadvantage groups or individuals on the grounds of race, culture, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
- Harassment: behaviour that ridicules, degrades, demeans, humiliates or intimidates someone or some group on the grounds of their colour, nationality, ethnicity or citizenship, religious beliefs, physical or mental wellbeing, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. It may take the form of verbal, psychological or physical harassment.
- Racial Incident: any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Equality Duties Falling on Schools

Race/ethnicity

Since the introduction of the Race Relations Act, 1976 (amended 2000), schools have to have due regard to:

- promote the elimination of unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Our intent as a school is to ensure equality of access through a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to needs of all learners in our community, equality of uptake to minimise effect of cultural capital and equality of outcome to ensure a just and democratic school community. Additionally we ensure that all members of the community are expected to treat one another with mutual respect, dignity and tolerance.

In order to meet the requirements of this duty, the school will monitor race equality on the basis of this Policy and will assess the impact on pupils, staff and parents/carers of different racial groups.

The headteacher will report progress regularly to the Governing Body.

Finally, we measure success not just in providing a learning environment in which cultural backgrounds are tolerated but rather one in which the diversity of our learning community is celebrated and accepted and events such as our multi-cultural month and multi-cultural evening allow us to achieve this important feature of our equality policy.

Disability

Since September 2002 it has been unlawful for any school to discriminate against disabled pupils in regard to admissions, education and associated services and exclusions. Grey Court School will

- publish a disability equality scheme action plan (Accessibility Plan) and involve disabled people where possible in producing these
- demonstrate actions and outcomes

The Disability Equality Duty (DED) came into force in December 2006. This was introduced to ensure the elimination of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of disability and to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people, including accessibility to buildings and publications.

In order to meet the requirements of this duty, the school will monitor disability equality on the basis of this Policy and will assess the impact on pupils, staff and parents/carers of with varying disabilities. The headteacher will report progress regularly to the Governing Body.

All students who have a disability which impacts on learning have progress monitored. If the student isn't registered on Education Needs List then they are monitored separately on the school's Vulnerability Register.

Gender including Trans-Gender

The Gender Equality Duty (GED) came into force in April 2007. It requires all public authorities, including schools to:

- promote gender equality of opportunity between men and women
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate harassment.

In order to comply with this duty, the school will:

- publish a gender equality scheme and action plan and involve stakeholders in producing these
- demonstrate actions and outcomes.

In order to meet the requirements of this duty, the school will monitor gender equality on the basis of this Policy and will assess the impact on pupils, staff and parents/carers. The headteacher will report progress regularly to the Governing Body.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 outlaw discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods and services. The school's admissions and recruitment procedures are non-discriminatory and ensure equality of opportunity. The school is fully committed to challenging homophobia/bi-phobia/transphobia in all contexts including educating students regarding the choice of terms they may choose to use around the school.

Religion and Belief

Parliament approved the Racial and Religious Hatred Act in 2006 and this makes it a criminal offence to use threatening words or behaviour with the intention of stirring up hatred against any group of people defined by their religious beliefs or lack of religious beliefs. Grey Court School will monitor all incidents of harassment alongside its monitoring of incidents of racism and bullying. We will ensure that our curriculum is non-discriminatory and includes equality of opportunity for learning about a variety of religious beliefs.

Age

The Employment Equality (Age) regulations 2006 prohibit unlawful discrimination on the grounds of age. The academy will comply with this duty in all of its recruitment activities.

Pregnancy / maternity / paternity

Please refer to the school's parental policy for a clear and detailed explanation

Bullying

The school has a strict anti-bullying policy which can be found under the Behaviour and Anti- Bullying Policy. Bullying can be physical, verbal, social or cyber. Bullying can happen once or over a sustained period of time. The school aim to act and challenge any form of bullying, we define the following behaviour by groups or individuals as bullying:

- Spreading rumours, hearsay or hurtful comments which interfere in the relationships of friendship groups.
- Name-calling or the use of nicknames used to embarrass or ridicule a person.

- Deliberately demeaning the efforts of an individual, group or class.
- Isolating an individual.
- Racist, sexist or homophobic/bi-phobic/transphobic comments.
- Demanding money or personal property from a person or deliberately damaging their property.
- Blackmail, coercion, threats, threatening behaviour or actual physical violence.
- Posting, sending and/or circulating derogatory images and / or comments via the Internet.

Bullying can take many forms including:

Physical – bullying which can include kicking, hitting, pushing and taking away belongings.

Verbal – bullying which includes name calling, mocking and making offensive comments.

Emotional – bullying which includes isolating an individual or spreading rumours about them.

Cyber-bullying – where technology is used to hurt an individual – for instance messages, posts or inappropriate use of social media or the internet.

Racist – bullying occurs when motivated by racial, ethnic or cultural prejudice.

Sexual – bullying is where someone makes unwanted physical contact or make sexually abusive comments. Please also refer to our Safeguarding policy and peer on peer abuse.

Homophobic and biphobic – bullying occurs when motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.

Transphobic – bullying occurs when motivated by a prejudice against people who identify as transgender. This type of bullying also includes prejudice against those who identify as gender neutral or nonbinary.

Disablist – occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people with any form of disability.

Sexist – occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against someone because of their gender.

Community Cohesion

The Education Act 2002, Section 78, states:

'The curriculum for all maintained schools should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to this Act introducing a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion.

Every school – whatever its intake and wherever it is located – is responsible for educating children and young people who will live and work in a country which is diverse in terms of cultures, religions or beliefs, ethnicities and social backgrounds.

By 'Community' is meant:

- the **school community** – the pupils, their families and the school's staff
- the **community around the school** – the local community of people who live and work there
- the **wider community of Britain**
- the **global community** – formed by the EU, Commonwealth and international links.

Community cohesion and engagement at Grey Court School are valued as means by which we promote equality of opportunity and strive to ensure equality of achievement.

IMPLEMENTATION

Grey Court School will comply with all of the duties outlined in section 2.3 above by monitoring and dealing effectively with incidents of harassment, by auditing the curriculum, monitoring attainment and ensuring equality of opportunity for all of its students. Every member of the school community has a part to play in ensuring that there are equal opportunities for every student.

To this end guidelines will be regularly reviewed in the following areas:

Discharge of Duties to Students

Admission to the school

In its admissions procedures, Grey Court School will not discriminate on grounds of protected characteristics including: ethnicity, race, faith, disability, gender or sexual orientation. This basic principle underpins the entire admissions process.

Pastoral arrangements

We ensure the welfare of all in the school community by applying best practice in:

- Behaviour, including guidelines on dealing with bullying, racial/sexual harassment and abuse child protection.
- Movement around the school
- Access to the school by parents/students with physical disabilities, including information access.
- The use of space in and around the school.
- Rewards and sanctions, exclusion procedures.
- Assemblies and collective worship so that, within the constraints of the law and agreed syllabus, the maximum respect is accorded all faiths represented in the school through RE and worship.
- Home/school partnership including communication.
- Consideration for the different values associated with other cultures.

Resources and the learning environment

We will convey the message of equality through:

- Displays and images
- Text books and materials

Curriculum access and content

We are achieving this through:

- The development of a full and challenging and inclusive curriculum
- Developing strategies to meet the needs of all pupils
- The development of resources to challenge stereotypical images and ensure a variety of resources to model positive images and show a balanced view of the diverse and Diversity society of the academy, the local community and the wider community.
- Monitoring the progress of all pupils by ethnicity and providing specific support for pupils for whom English is an additional language, with guidance from the central EMTAS service.
- Links to SMSC to ensure that a range of issues regarding equality, such as race and disability for instance, are linked to the delivery of curriculum as appropriate.
- Monitoring of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and the development of support and appropriate access to the curriculum through the termly review of provision maps.

Links with the Community, Business and Industry:

- Data on destinations on leaving school
- Careers counselling and education
- Work Experience
- Ethnic Monitoring

We protect the educational and pastoral needs of our students by:

- Monitoring academic progress and attainment by ethnicity, religion and economic status with appropriate intervention to ensure equality of achievement.
- Providing data on language stages for our EAL students in line with requirements from the central EMTAS service.
- Monitoring rewards, sanctions, exclusions and attendance against ethnicity and groups of learners.

Staff

Grey Court School confirms its commitment to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities for all staff regardless of their sex, race, ethnic or national origins, colour, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, class or social background. We are firmly opposed to any form of discrimination based upon these factors.

All staff should have the opportunity for employment or advancement on the basis of their ability, qualifications and fitness for work. Grey Court operates a policy of equal opportunity for the recruitment, selection and promotion of all its staff in conjunction with a representative from the Governing Body.

We are committed to equal opportunities in relation to:

- Recruitment complies with current legislation
- Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD) within Grey Court School will be based solely on an objective assessment of the individual's capabilities, performance and potential.

- Work Life Balance
- Racial abuse & provocation
- Sexual harassment
- Part time work and job sharing

All staff have an obligation to uphold the equal opportunities policy of the school.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is a general statement of responsibilities for the implementation of this policy.

Governors

Governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school complies with the relevant equality legislation.
- Ensuring that the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed.
- Ensuring that the policy is reviewed yearly.

Headteacher

The Headteacher and the School Management team are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed.
- Ensuring that the policy is reviewed yearly.
- Ensuring that the race, disability and gender equality plans are readily available and that all members of the school community know about them.
- Ensuring that all staff and governors know their responsibilities and receive training.
- Support to carry these out effectively.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination to investigate all incidents of bullying, whether it is racist, homophobic, sexist or related to gender or religious beliefs.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Treat colleagues, young people and visitors with dignity and respect; and avoid behaving in any manner that may give rise to claims of discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- Challenge and report racist, homophobic and other hate-related incidents.
- Recognising and challenging bias and stereotyping.
- Support and participate in any measures introduced to promote equality and diversity, equal opportunities and good race relations.
- Taking up training opportunities and evaluating the impact of this training.
- Actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage in accordance with their responsibilities

- The school is currently taking steps to include equality, diversity and inclusion reviews, within the staff annual appraisals

Parents, Carers and Students

Parents, carers and students will be made aware of the Equalities Policy and will be expected to comply with the school's duties as outlined under this Policy.

Visitors and Contractors

Visitors and Contractors will be made aware of their responsibility to comply with the school's safeguarding policies.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING

The Headteacher and the Governing Body will review this policy on an annual basis against the Equalities Action Plan.

BREACHES OF THE POLICY

Breaches of the policy will be dealt with in line with our commitment to meet the general duty. Staff have initial responsibility for dealing with incidents of harassment and racist incidents. The senior leadership team has responsibility for monitoring sanctions, including incidents where staff have breached the policy, as well as pupils.

The head teacher will be informed of incidents of breaches of the policy by staff, parents, visitors and contractors and the incident will be discussed in line with the school's commitment to anti-discriminatory practice.

OTHER POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Accessibility Plan
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Curriculum Policy
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
- Home & School in Partnership
- Community Cohesion Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Prospectus