



Equality and Diversity Policy

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

Governor's Committee Responsibility:	Curriculum and Student Welfare
Date Approved:	March 2013
Reviewed:	Summer 2017
Review Period:	Annually
Next Review Date:	Summer 2018

Autism Statement

We at Limpsfield Grange School aim to develop practices and policies that promote and sustain the wellbeing of children and young people with Autism.

We aim to offer training and support for staff parents and other stakeholders to enable them to best meet the needs of children and young people with Autism.

We aim to establish a consistent approach across all areas of our school community that enables all students with Autism to learn and make progress.

We aim to ensure that our communication with all stakeholders is clear and appropriate.

We aim to ensure that our physical environment is responsive to the needs of children and young people with Autism, and that we take account of the sensory needs of individuals.

We aim to provide a range of experiences that enable interaction; promote social inclusion and independence; and support learners with Autism to reflect on their experiences.

We aim to empower our learners to understand their Autism and celebrate their difference.

We aim to provide on-going high quality staff development for all members of staff at Limpsfield Grange.

We aim to develop and sustain a multi-disciplinary approach where professionals plan and work together to meet the needs of learners with Autism.

LIMPSFIELD GRANGE SCHOOL EQUALITY POLICY

Introduction

We have a positive approach at Limpsfield Grange School to promoting Equality, as defined within the Equality Act 2010. Previous legislation was replaced by this Act which imposed a new single equality duty designed to protect all aspects of a person's identity (described as "protected characteristics"). Limpsfield Grange School has duties placed upon it as an employer, a body that carries out a public function, and as a provider of education.

The single equality duty has two main parts – the general equality duty and the specific duties. The general duty sets out the equality matters that the school needs to consider when making decisions that affect students or staff with different protected characteristics. This duty has three elements to which the school must pay due regard. These elements are:

- The need to **eliminate** discrimination; harassment; victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- **Advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The need is further defined in the Equality Act 2010 as the need to remove or minimise disadvantage, take steps to meet different needs and to encourage participation when it is disproportionately low.
- **Foster** good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The specific duties for schools will enable them to meet the general duty because they are:

- Required to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the equality duty
- Required to prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives.

The Equality Act and the duties outlined therein fit the values and ethos of Limpsfield Grange School very well, and although the specific duty is imposed on public sector schools it is recognised by the school that it would be good practice for the school to meet the general duties outlined. Limpsfield Grange School will use the Equality Act to support the identification of priorities such as underperformance of specific groups, poor progression and bullying. The school will do this by collating evidence, considering issues and taking relevant action to improve the experience of students. The school will focus on what can be done to resolve any issues and to improve outcomes by using measurable objectives. Limpsfield Grange will consider objectives around such aspects as rates of attendance, student attainment and progression, participation in school and residential activities, bullying, engagement in learning and exclusions. In compiling and reporting on such objectives we will use data and information from our continuous process of self-evaluation.

In order to meet the general duties of the Equality Act we will ensure that the three elements (eliminate, advance and foster) are met in the course of curriculum delivery and through opportunities arising in our residential provision.

Scope of the policy

The Equality Act applies to all people at the school or involved with the school, i.e. students, staff, Governors, parents carers and members of students' families, members of our wider community, suppliers, companies who hire our facilities etc.

The provisions of the Equality Act 2010 prohibit schools from discriminating against harassing or victimising:

- Prospective students in relation to admissions arrangements
- Students at the school
- Former students, where there is a continuing relationship based on the individual having been a student of the school

“Avoiding discrimination and promoting equality supports the agenda of improving attainment and progress for all pupils. Good education and skills are crucial for opening opportunities and increasing the chances of a successful life.” (*Equality and Human Rights Commission May 2014*)

The Equality Act protects all people from discrimination and harassment based on “*protected characteristics*” which for students are:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

For employees there are the additional characteristics of:

- Age
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

Equality and diversity statement

Limpsfield Grange School is committed to ensuring equality of provision and opportunity without discrimination for all students, staff, parents & carers, Governors and members of our wider community. We are committed to the fair treatment of all regardless of age, colour, disability, ethnicity, gender, nationality, race, religious or spiritual beliefs, responsibility for dependents, sexual orientation, or any other personal characteristic.

Discrimination is defined in the Equality Act as being:

- Direct discrimination (including discrimination based on perception or association)
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from disability
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people

Direct discrimination – occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person is treated because of a protected characteristic.

Discrimination based on association – occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with someone (for example a parent, sibling or carer) who has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination based on perception - occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they are thought mistakenly to have a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination – occurs when a provision criterion or practice is applied in the same way for all people or particular groups of people, but has the effect of putting people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

Discrimination arising from a disability – occurs when a person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability, and this treatment cannot be justified. By acting quickly and putting in place reasonable adjustments for disabled people, discrimination can and should be avoided.

Harassment as described below is unlawful under the Equality Act:

- Harassment related to a protected characteristic
- Sexual harassment
- Less favourable treatment of a person because they submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex

The related protected characteristic for schools provision are:

- Disability
- Race
- Sex

Harassment occurs when unwanted behaviour, which is related to a protected characteristic, has the effect or purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Sexual harassment occurs when unwanted behaviour occurs which is of a sexual nature and has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation is defined by the Equality Act as treating someone badly because they have:

- Made a complaint or claim of discrimination
- Helped someone else make a claim by giving evidence or information
- Making an allegation that the school or someone else has breached the Act
- Doing anything else in connection with the Act

As is the case in other schools, the Equality Duty will be used by Limsfield Grange School to help policy making become more relevant to all groups of students and help the school identify priorities for action. The school knows that the duty applies to all policies, procedures and practices, and will use it proactively to identify issues and shape policies around the needs of different groups of students whose interests are protected by it. Accordingly the school will make "reasonable adjustments" to accommodate the needs of different people, especially those with disabilities.

The overall responsibility for ensuring that the school does not breach the Equality Act 2010 lies with the Governing Body. Individuals (including students) are responsible for ensuring that they do not break the law, so the school will work alongside students to ensure that they understand their rights and responsibilities in this regard.

Procedures

The Governing Body is liable for the actions of its employees and “agents” (which can include students) of the school, unless it can show that it took “all reasonable steps” to prevent the discrimination, harassment or victimisation from taking place. In some circumstances an employee or agent may be personally liable for acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation. It is the duty of the school to take steps to prevent employees or agents of the school from acting unlawfully, but it is the duty of the individual to make sure that they understand their personal liability.

Limpsfield Grange School will actively work to foster good relations across all protected characteristics.

The need to have “due regard” to equality consideration is a continuing one, so the school will monitor the success of initiatives, use statistical data for monitoring, track individual attainment, observe lessons and speak to students and parents and carers to gather useful information.

The impact of this policy will be monitored through annual reports given to the Governing Body by the Headteacher. This report will include details of any incidents such as bullying or racial harassment that are related to the duties of the Equality Act, and specifically to any protected characteristic.

Students at Limpsfield Grange School all have special educational needs. The majority of our students are autistic and process the world differently to the neurotypical people. The school works tirelessly to improve outcomes and provide an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all learners. The school uses objectives and target based approaches in planning, and this is to be further developed to encompass the specific duty of the Equality Act.

Roles and Responsibilities

All who work in the school have a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion and avoiding unfair discrimination. Overall responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with the Leadership Team and the Governing Body. Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating work on equality issues, including consultation with stakeholders and writing and reviewing the School Improvement Plan
- Dealing with reports of harassment
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of all groups of students, especially those considered to be vulnerable
- Monitoring exclusions

Specific responsibilities for other members of the school community are outlined below.

Governors are responsible for

- Ensuring that the school complies with all current Equality legislation
- That this policy is adhered to

The Headteacher is responsible for

- Implementing the Equality and Diversity Policy
- Ensuring that the policy is available and that Governors, staff, students and parents carers and families know about it
- Ensuring that this policy and its procedures are followed
- Producing regular information for staff and Governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them as required
- Ensuring all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support as appropriate
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination

Staff are responsible for

- Treating all members of our school community with respect
- Recognising contributions made by every student within the school
- Dealing with racist incidents, recognising and tackling bias and stereotyping
- Ensure that all incidents of a discriminatory nature are immediately challenged and recorded through the appropriate channels
- Logging all racist incidents in accordance with statutory guidance
- Promoting equality and good race relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender or disability
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination

Class teachers are responsible for

- Ensuring that they are aware of the background of all children they teach and that students are treated equally and with respect
- Paying due regard to racial and cultural sensitivities of the class. Teachers strive to incorporate diversity in a positive way which challenges stereotypes and assumptions

Parents carers and families are

- Expected to support the schools' Equality and Diversity Policy
- Expected to support the sanction applied where a child has intentionally behaved in an unfair, unjust or discriminatory manner
- Work with staff to deliver a strong and consistent message about appropriate behaviour

Students are expected

- To abide by this policy, in school and when travelling to and from school
- Report an incident of discrimination so that we can deal with the matter swiftly and efficiently

Examinations:

At the end of Key Stage 3, students are assessed to identify which exam access arrangements they are entitled to in order to allow them to access the assessment and remove, as much as possible, the disadvantages which are the result of their special educational needs, impairments and/or disabilities. The school will support the students and provide the necessary resources so that they are able to achieve the best possible outcome and fulfil their potential without affecting the integrity of the assessment.

This policy will be read and reviewed in conjunction with all of our school policies, in particular the following school policies:

- Accessibility Plan*
- Anti-Bullying Policy*
- Behaviour Policy*
- Criteria for Admission to Limpsfield Grange School*
- Complaints Policy & Procedures*
- Safeguarding Policy*
- Sex and Relationship Policy*
- Speaking Out / Whistle Blowing Policy*
- Special Needs Policy*
- Staff Behaviour Policy*

- Complaints and disputes will be resolved through the schools Complaints Procedure
- Monitoring reports will be linked to those given under the safeguarding arrangements
- Incidents of bullying based on protected characteristics (for example homophobic or race based) will be included in relevant reports to Governors
- Staff training and development will be offered to ensure that staff understand their rights and responsibilities both as individuals and as agents of the school
- Policies relating to staff (for example those relevant to making suitable arrangements for disabled staff) will separately ensure that the requirements of the Equality Act are met

Further Information

The Equality & Human Rights Commission www.equalityhumanrights.com
Government Equalities Office www.equalities.gov.uk
About Equal Opportunities www.aboutequalopportunities.co.uk

Review

The Governing Body of Limpsfield Grange School adopted this policy on: _____

It will be reviewed on: _____

Signed: _____

Dated: _____