

# Reading Girls' School



## Equality Policy

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**Status:** Statutory. To be reviewed annually

**Level of approval:** Governing Body

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**Date of most recent approval:** to be ratified

**Date of next review:** March 2019

### **Purpose of the Policy:**

Reading Girls' School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of protected characteristics. These are: age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual identity, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (for employees).

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

In order to meet our general duties we must:

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty

We will not publish any information that allows the identification of any child or adult.

2. Publish Equality Objectives

To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine the focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as a school, as we strive to ensure equality is applied to all the services listed below:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Achievement
- Exclusions
- Prejudice-related incidents

### **Links to other policies**

This policy is the key document for information about our approach to equality but there are references to this in the following policies, among others: Behaviour, Admissions, SEN, and Recruitment and Retention of Staff

### **Principles**

The Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that the duties outlined in the act reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Our approach to equality is based on the following seven principles:

1. All learners are of equal value
2. We recognise, respect and value diversity
3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of belonging
4. We observe good equalities practice for our staff
5. We aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers
6. We consult and involve widely
7. We strive to ensure that society will benefit.

### **What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions, the way we provide education for our students and the way we provide access for students to facilities and services.

We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled students, which is designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled students and stop disabled students being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.

We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the school.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against students by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

### **Behaviour, exclusions and attendance**

Reading Girls' School's Behaviour Policy takes full account of the duties enshrined in the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for students with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

## **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related incidents**

Reading Girls' School challenges all forms of prejudice and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system. We keep a record of incidents and provide a report to governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of incidents and how the school has dealt with them. We also report incidents to the Local Authority using their guidance material.

## **What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups**

We use a range of teaching strategies that ensure we meet the needs of all students. We provide support to students at risk of underachieving. We are alert to and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as ethnicity, gender, disability and sexuality. We ensure equality of access for all students to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

## **What we are doing to foster good relations**

We prepare our students for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students. We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through tutor time and across the curriculum. We use resources and materials that reflect the diversity of the school population and local community in terms of ethnicity, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act as described below:

- **The school governing body** is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.
- **The Headteacher** is responsible for implementing the policy, for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination. The Inclusion Manager, who is a member of the extended Senior Leadership Team, has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes.
- **All teaching and support staff** will: promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom, challenge prejudice and discrimination, plan and deliver lessons that reflect the school's equality principles, and maintain the highest expectations of success for all students.

- **Parents/carers** take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and inform the school leadership team and governing body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these. They take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment given to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.
- **Students** take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and inform the governing body and school leadership team of actions that can be taken to eradicate these.
- **All stakeholders** are expected to uphold the commitment made by the Headteacher on how students and parents/carers, staff and the wider school community can expect to be treated.

### **Monitoring and reviewing the policy**

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually and make adjustments as appropriate.

### **Disseminating the policy**

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives document is available on the school website, as paper copies available from the school office, and on the staff public drive.