

Equality and Inclusion in Education Policy

Saffron Walden County High School



Equality and Inclusion in Education Policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity. Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties. The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty” This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- Eliminate discrimination 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
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance.

This policy focuses on the education and pastoral care that we provide for our students to promote equality and inclusion. There is a separate Saffron Academy Trust Policy showing how we meet our obligations as an employer for our staff.

1. Ethos and Expectations

The Governing Body of Saffron Walden County High School recognises its responsibility to ensure the provision of equality of opportunity and is concerned to meet the needs of all members of the school in this respect in order to ensure everyone can thrive and meet their full potential.

Saffron Walden County High School is committed to being an inclusive school. We see having a diverse population of both pupils and staff as one of the school’s greatest strengths. We will treat all members of the school community with respect and dignity at all times and we seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination for all of our students.

The school values the views of all members of the school. Accordingly, all members of the school will be offered regular opportunities to exchange ideas and information. Students have the opportunity to share their views with each other and with the staff through such forums as:

- Student Voice meetings
- Tutor time
- Assemblies
- Subject lessons, including Personal & Social Education lessons
- Tutorials

Harassment and bullying in any form is unacceptable. Any behaviour which denies equality of opportunity to any member of the school, or which deliberately seeks to offend or isolate because of race, culture, religion, gender, age, sexuality, physical ability, domestic responsibility/circumstances or HIV status will not be tolerated (*please see our Behaviour Policy*).

We encourage pupils to be proud and confident in themselves, to have respect for others, to stand up to injustice, and to report any breaches of these expectations.

We educate our students on their responsibility for being alert to and challenging discrimination; embracing diversity; respecting different faiths and beliefs; and upholding equality of opportunity for all.

We provide support and different options to ensure all students can report any incident. Our anti-hate ambassadors will provide support and guidance to others and provide another channel of support and reporting for students. Students can also report anonymously, if they prefer to do so.

SWCHS will provide appropriate support to all parties where a breach of its Equal Opportunities Policy has occurred and will consult with parents and Governors as necessary.

2. Curriculum Intent and Implementation

The Governing Body believes that all members of the school community are entitled to experience a safe, secure environment and to make full use of the school's facilities and the education provided by the school.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all. Curriculum planning and monitoring ensures that we offer a broad and balanced curriculum that reflects our diverse society. The school's curriculum reflects our ethos of valuing and respecting every individual irrespective of race, culture, religion, gender, age, sexuality, academic or physical ability, domestic responsibilities or circumstances or HIV status.

Subject Areas and Departments review their curriculum offer on an annual basis and as a part of this process will consider how best to further awareness of equal opportunities matters through the curriculum, and wherever appropriate will take the opportunity to amend, evaluate and replace existing teaching material. Where appropriate, they will seek guidance from external bodies and experts to ensure our curriculum is rigorous and impactful.

We will use our assembly programme, PSHE curriculum external providers and speakers to help us celebrate and educate about diversity and inclusion and to promote understanding and appreciation of other faiths, races and cultures.

3. Training for Staff

We recognise that discrimination may be, for example, direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional.

We will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities promote equality of opportunity and are given appropriate training and support to do so effectively.

Our staff will have regular training on how to respond to any hate incidents. This includes ensuring all staff know the importance of reporting any hate-based incidents/discrimination.

Our CPD programme includes training to ensure teacher expectations of pupil achievements are not based on preconceived stereotypes. Assessment of pupil strengths will be appropriate.

Our pastoral teams have additional training on responding to harmful sexual behaviours including sexual harassment/unacceptable comments. These issues are also addressed in our RSE, assembly and external speaker programme. *Please also see separate policy on responding to Harmful Sexual Behaviours.*

4. Extra-Curricular Activities

The school will provide equality of opportunity for every pupil in its extra-curricular activities and trips programme.

5. Language and Language Diversity

SWCHS aims to ensure that all its pupils can use English with ease and additional support will be given to EAL students, if required.

In subjects other than English, pupils are assessed on their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter over and above their competence in English. Accordingly, the dialect and/or accent of any pupil will not invite comment.

SWCHS is aware that some of its pupils may speak another language at home, and welcomes such linguistic diversity, believing that this positive approach encourages greater pupil participation in all respects.

The school is concerned to ensure that the parents and family of such pupils receive equal opportunity of access to staff and premises.

6. Home School Liaison

In order to pursue the continued effectiveness of its pupils' education, SWCHS is committed to furthering parental involvement in the school.

Parents are welcomed into the school on a number of occasions each year and are encouraged to communicate any concerns they may have.

The school will treat reported or detected incidents of bullying or harassment as a matter of urgency.

7. Career Opportunities, CEIAG and work experience

SWCHS will work together with parents, employers and external providers of Careers Education and Guidance to ensure that pupils receive positive images about career opportunities and expectations.

All prospective providers of work experience will be informed of the existence of the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

The school will monitor placements for work experience to avoid the stereotyping of career opportunities for its pupils on grounds of gender, race, domestic circumstance or educational need.

Prior to their work experience, pupils will be informed of appropriate procedures to follow if they experience discrimination or the denial of equal opportunities during their placement.

8. Equality Objectives

The school will set Equality Objectives and publish these on the website.

The governors will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteachers

The headteachers will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

The designated members of staff for equality (our Diversity Champions) will:

- Support the headteachers in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Support the headteachers in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

All school staff are expected to have regard to work to achieve our objectives.

9. Equality considerations in decision-making

The governors and senior staff will ensure that due regard is given to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. The school will always consider the impact of significant decisions on particular groups.