Highams Park
Academy Trust

Highams Park Academy Trust

Policy and Procedure for Equality and Diversity

Date of Review	SLMT Lead	Trustee Approval
3 October 2024	Neil Tobias	3 October 2024
2 October 2025	Neil Tobias	2 October 2025

Date of next review: October 2026

Highams Park Academy Trust

Highams Park Secondary School

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Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

1. Aims of a School Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

- **Promote Equality for All**
  Ensure that all students, staff, and members of the school community have equal opportunities to succeed and thrive, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background. The policy aims to create a level playing field where everyone is treated fairly.
- **Eliminate Discrimination**
  Actively work to identify and remove all forms of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation within the school environment. The policy commits to creating a safe, welcoming space where discriminatory behaviours and attitudes are not tolerated.
- **Celebrate Diversity**
  Embrace and celebrate the diverse backgrounds, cultures, perspectives, and experiences of the school community. Celebrate the school's diversity community in assemblies, tutor time, lessons and in extracurricular activities. The policy aims to foster an environment where diversity is viewed as a strength, enriching the learning experience and personal development of all students.
- **Foster Inclusion and Belonging**
  Create a school culture where every student, staff member, and visitor feels they belong, regardless of their background or identity. The policy seeks to ensure that all members of the community are welcomed and respected, and that their unique contributions are valued.
- **Advance Equal Opportunities**
  Ensure that everyone in the school has access to the same opportunities, resources, and support systems. This includes addressing specific barriers that might hinder participation or achievement for individuals from historically underrepresented or disadvantaged groups.

- **Develop Inclusive Practices**
  Promote inclusive practices in teaching, learning, and school management. This includes adapting resources, lessons, and school policies to meet the diverse needs of the school community and ensuring that everyone is fully included in school life.
- **Prepare Students for a Diverse Society**
  Equip students with the knowledge, skills, and understanding to thrive in a multicultural, diverse society. The policy aims to develop students' ability to appreciate different perspectives, challenge prejudice, and act as responsible citizens who contribute to an inclusive world.
- **Support the Wellbeing of All**
  Recognise and support the mental, emotional, and social wellbeing of all members of the school community, with special attention to those who may be vulnerable or face additional challenges due to discrimination or exclusion.
- **Ensure Accountability and Continuous Improvement**
  Establish mechanisms for regularly reviewing and improving the school's EDI practices. This includes setting measurable goals, gathering feedback from the school community, and ensuring that progress is monitored and reported.

These aims together ensure that the school is a place where equality, diversity, and inclusion are not only promoted but actively practiced in every area of school life.

2. Introduction

At Highams Park School, we are committed to creating an environment where every individual—students, staff, and members of the wider school community—feels respected, valued, and supported. We believe in the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) as fundamental principles that drive positive relationships, learning, and personal development.

This policy outlines our approach to promoting equality, celebrating diversity, and ensuring inclusivity in every aspect of school life.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed by the school.
- All students attending the school.
- Visitors, volunteers, and contractors.
- Trustees and external partners engaged with the school.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010 and covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination.
- The Equality Act 2010 Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector duty to publish objectives

In addition, this policy is underpinned by relevant Department for Education (DfE) guidelines and supports the school's commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring the promotion of equality and the prevention of discrimination.

5. Aims and Objectives

Highams Park School aims to:

- **Promote equality** by eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by law.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** by removing or minimising disadvantages, meeting the needs of individuals, and encouraging participation where it is disproportionately low.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- **Celebrate diversity** in all its forms, fostering a school culture where difference is not just accepted but valued.
- **Create an inclusive environment** where all members of the school community can thrive and achieve their full potential.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- **The Trustees** are responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and monitors the implementation of this policy.
- **The Principal** is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy, including embedding EDI into the school's practices and curriculum, and addressing issues where necessary.
- **All Staff** are responsible for promoting an inclusive environment and must ensure that their practices and interactions are free from bias or discrimination. Staff are also expected to challenge discriminatory behaviour and foster a positive school culture.
- **Students** are encouraged to respect and value differences within the school community and to report any concerns relating to discrimination or exclusion.
- **Parents and Carers** are expected to support the school's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and to work in partnership with the school to promote these values at home and within the community.

7. Implementation

a. Curriculum

Highams Park School is committed to delivering a curriculum that reflects a wide range of perspectives, promotes understanding of diverse cultures and experiences, and challenges stereotypes. We will actively ensure that all students, regardless of background, are engaged and empowered through learning.

b. Teaching and Learning

Staff are expected to use teaching strategies that are inclusive, ensuring that learning resources and activities are accessible to all students. We will work to provide differentiated learning opportunities that cater to individual needs and remove barriers to participation.

c. Student Support

We recognise that some students may require additional support to access education fully. This includes providing support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made to remove barriers for all students.

d. Recruitment and Employment

Highams Park School is committed to ensuring fair and equal access to employment and promotion opportunities. Recruitment processes will be transparent, based on merit, and free from discrimination. We are dedicated to creating a diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve.

e. Training and Development

All staff will receive regular EDI training to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities under this policy. The school will also provide ongoing professional development to support inclusive teaching practices and the promotion of diversity and equality within the curriculum.

8. Addressing Discrimination

We have a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, including bullying, harassment, and victimisation. All incidents will be addressed in accordance with the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies.

Any member of the school community found to have acted in a discriminatory manner will be subject to appropriate action, which may include disciplinary measures. The school encourages all individuals to report incidents of discrimination, and we will ensure that all complaints are taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and addressed promptly.

9. Monitoring and Review

The school will regularly review this policy to ensure that it remains current and relevant. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will oversee the monitoring of the policy's effectiveness, and the Trustees will be informed of any significant findings.

We will monitor the progress of specific groups of students to ensure that the principles of equality are being upheld. Where gaps in attainment or participation are identified, appropriate actions will be taken to address these issues.

10. Consultation and Engagement

The views of students, staff, parents, and external stakeholders will be sought to inform our ongoing work on equality, diversity, and inclusion. Feedback will help shape future developments and ensure that our policy reflects the needs and aspirations of our entire community.

11. Publication and Accessibility

This policy will be published on the school's website and available to all staff, students, parents, and visitors. We are committed to ensuring that this policy is accessible to all, and we will provide alternative formats where needed.