Thomas Telford

Multi Academy Trust

Equality Policy

Redhill Primary Academy and Thomas Telford Primary Free School

Signed

Mrs Raj Samra
Chair of Governors
September 2026

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This single policy replaces separate policies the schools have on race, disability and gender to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This policy reflects the Equality Act 2010 and current Department for Education guidance, including *Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools*. Part one sets out the schools' aims to promote equality of opportunity and comply with the Act; Part Two sets out the legal duties which are referred to in Part One.

Part One

The primary aim of the schools is to enable all pupils to take part as fully as possible in every part of school life by developing each child's self-confidence, recognising their strengths and encouraging them to achieve their full potential.

The schools will take steps to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination or harassment across all the protected characteristics (age, race, sex reassignment, disability, marriage and civil partnership, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, sex, sexual orientation) within the schools' community.

This means:

- We will take reasonable and necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, enabling our pupils to take as full a part as possible in all activities of the schools. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the schools environment and its activities are as accessible and welcoming as possible for pupils, staff and visitors to the schools. We are also committed to ensuring staff with a disability have equality of opportunity.
- We will actively encourage positive attitudes towards pupils and staff and expect everyone to treat others with dignity and respect.
- We will regularly consider the ways in which the taught and wider curricula will help to promote awareness of the rights of individuals and develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
- We will regularly consider the ways in which our teaching and the curriculum provision will support high standards of attainment, promote common values, and help students understand and value the diversity that surrounds them, and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- We will monitor the progress and achievement of pupils by the relevant and appropriate protected characteristics. This information will help the schools to ensure that individual pupils are achieving their potential, the schools are being inclusive in practise, and trends are identified which inform the setting of our equality objectives in the schools' improvement plan (See Appendix).
- We will collect and analyse information about protected characteristics in relation to staff recruitment, retention, training opportunities and promotions to ensure all staff have equality

of opportunity. We will not ask health-related questions to job applicants before offering a job, unless it relates to an intrinsic function of the work they do. We will make reasonable adjustments such as providing auxiliary aids for our disabled staff.

- Staff will ensure the curriculum is accessible to all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or those for whom English is not their first language. Auxiliary aids and services will be provided for them, where reasonable adjustments are required. By planning ahead, staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the schools will monitor the uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- We will seek the view of advisory staff and outside agencies and partnerships with other schools where this is needed. In planning the curriculum and resources the schools will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality.
- Bullying and Prejudice Related Incidents will be carefully monitored and dealt with effectively. Regular training will be given to both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting these.
- Reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying. (See bullying and racist incident logs in the Headteachers office).
- We expect that all staff will be role models for equal opportunities, deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents and be able to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Throughout the year, the schools will plan on-going events to raise awareness of equality and diversity. This may include a focus on disability, respect for other cultures, religions and beliefs, anti-homophobia/gay pride, gender equality, developing community cohesion and an understanding of the effects of discrimination. This will be set out as equality objectives in the schools' improvement plan. (See Appendix)
- We will ensure pupil/parent/staff consultation is regularly sought in the development and review of this policy.
- We will regularly seek the views of pupils, parents, advisory staff and visitors to the schools, to ensure that the schools' environment is as safe and accessible as possible to all school users. We will regularly review our accessibility plans (See Accessibility Policy).
- The schools welcome a diverse range of candidates and encourages those who are currently under-represented to join.
- We will ensure that all staff are aware of their legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, the different forms of discrimination and what 'reasonable adjustments' mean in practise.
- Training and awareness sessions will be set out in the schools' improvement plan.
- The schools will consult with stakeholders, i.e. pupil, parents/carers, staff and relevant community groups, to establish equality objectives and draw up a plan based on information collected on protected groups and accessibility planning. These equality objectives will be reviewed and reported on annually.
- The schools place the policy on their website to show how it is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (See Appendix) in the Equality Act 2010 and advancing equality of opportunity.
- When drawing up policies, it is best practise to carry out an equality impact assessment (EIA) to ensure a policy does not, even inadvertently, disadvantage groups of pupils with protected characteristics. As a minimum, the governing body must consider to what extent a new/revised policy, practise or plan meets the Public Sector Equality Duties (eliminates discrimination, advances equality and fosters good relations for all the protected characteristics) and recommend changes/mitigations should feel the policy, practise or plan could be improved to fulfil the Duties (DCC policies will have already had EIAS carried out).

Part Two

Our Legal Duties

Legislation relating to equality and discrimination is laid out in the Equality Act 2010.

This legislation covers employment (work), the provision of services and public functions, and education.

Employers (schools) are liable for discriminatory acts of their employees if they did not take reasonable steps to prevent such acts. Employees can be liable for acts (where an employer took reasonable steps to prevent such acts).

The 'Protected Characteristics' within equality law are:

- Age- A person of a particular age (e.g. 32-year-old) or a range of ages (e.g. 18-30 year olds). Age discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
- Disability- A person has a disability if she/he has, or has had, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It includes discrimination arising from something connected with their disability such as use of aids or medical conditions. HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.
- Gender reassignment- A person (usually with 'gender dysphoria') who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (the process of changing physiological or other attributes of sex, therefore changing from male to female, or female to male). 'Trans' is an umbrella term to describe people with this 'Gender Identity'. 'Intersex' or 'Third Sex' is not covered by the Act but the schools will treat Intersex children with the same degree of equality as children with gender dysphoria. Children as young as five may begin to show signs of gender dysphoria and therefore it is relevant in any school environment. (The Intercom Trust in Devon supports schools in supporting children undergoing gender reassignment).
- Marriage and Civil Partnership- marriage and civil partnership discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
- Pregnancy and maternity- Maternity refers to the period of 26 weeks after the birth (including still births), which reflects the period of a women's Ordinary Maternity Leave entitlement in the employment context. In employment, it also covers (where eligible) the period up to the end of her Additional Maternity Leave.
- Race- A person's colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. It includes Travellers and Gypsies as well as White British people.
- Religion and belief- Religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. Religion and belief discrimination does not prevent a school from carrying out collective worship or other curriculum-based activities, but pupils may withdraw from acts of collective worship.
- Sex- A man or a woman.
- Sexual orientation- A person's sexual orientation towards the same sex (lesbian or gay), the opposite sex (heterosexual) or to both sexes (bisexual). Although children may not identify as gay or lesbian when very young, promotion of sexual orientation equality is as relevant in a primary school's environment as it is in a secondary school. For example, a child may have an older sibling or parent who is gay. Children may experience friends 'questioning' or 'coming out' when they are in secondary schools or college. Schools with a particular religious ethos cannot discriminate against lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils.

It is also unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated. So, for example, a school must not discriminate by refusing to admit a pupil because his parents are gay men

or lesbians. It would be race discrimination to treat a white pupil less favourably because she has a black boyfriend.

'Prohibited Conduct' (acts that are unlawful):

- Direct Discrimination- Less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination- A provision, criteria or practice that puts a person at a particular disadvantage and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Harassment- Conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It includes harassment by a third party (e.g. customer or contractor) in the employment context.
- Victimisation- Subjecting a person to a detriment because of their involvement with proceedings (a compliant) brought in connection with this Act.
- Discrimination arising from disability- treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (such as periods of absence from work or medical conditions) and failure to make reasonable adjustments.
- Gender re-assignment discrimination- Not allowing reasonable absence from work for the purposed of gender-reassignment in line with normal provision such as sick leave.
- Pregnancy/ maternity related discrimination- Unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity. It includes unfavourable treatment of a women or girl because she is breastfeeding.
- Discrimination by association or perception- For example, discriminating against someone because they 'look gay', or because they have a gay brother; discriminating against someone because they care for a disabled relative.

Schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities.

Public Sector Duties (applies to schools):

A schools must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to (in relation to protected characteristics above):

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct.

2. Advance equality of opportunity (remove or minimise disadvantage; meet people's needs; take account of disabilities; encourage participation in public life).

3. Foster good relations between people (tackle prejudice and promote understanding).

In practice, 'due regard' means giving relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty, so decision makers in schools must have due regard when making a decision, developing a policy or taking an action as to whether it may have implications for people because of their protected characteristics.

Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility Plans (Schedule 10)

Schools are required to:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example steps and lifts.
- Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/ services.
- Provide information in an accessible format.
- Develop and implement (by allocating appropriate resources) Accessibility Plans which will:

  1. Increase disabled pupils' access to the school's curriculum.
  2. Improve the physical environment.
  3. Improve provision of information.

  (See Appendix)

The duty is an anticipatory and continuing on that schools owe to disabled pupils generally, regardless of whether the schools know that a particular pupil is disabled or whether the school currently has disabled pupils. The schools will need to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments that it may need to make, working with the relevant admissions authority as appropriate.

Responsibilities

Local Governing Body

- Ensure that the schools comply with equality-related legislation.
- Ensure that the policy and its procedures are implemented by the Headteacher.
- Ensure all other schools policies promote equality.
- Give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making decisions.

Headteacher

- Implement the policy and its related procedures.
- Make all staff aware of their responsibilities and provide training as appropriate to enable them to effectively deliver this policy.
- Take appropriate action in any case of actual or potential discrimination.
- Ensure that all staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and providing reasonable adjustments to staff. It is unlawful for an employer to enquire about the health of an applicant for a job until a job offer has been made, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work- for example, ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capability to carry out the duties. Schools should no longer require job applicants to complete a generic health questionnaire. Neither should a schools seek out past sickness records until they have made a job offer.
- Ensure that all staff and pupils are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents.

All Staff

- Enact this policy, its commitment and procedures, and their responsibilities associated with this policy.

- Deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents and know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on any grounds.
- Attend such training and information opportunities as necessary to enact this policy and keep up to date with equality legislation.
- Be models of equal opportunities through their words and actions.
- Ensure that pupils refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or any other behaviour that contravenes this policy.

Visitors (e.g. parent helpers, contractors)

- Be aware of, and comply with, the schools' equality policy.
- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour (for example, racist language) on school premises.

Redhill Primary Academy and Nursery and Thomas Telford Primary Free School staff abide by the recommendations and rulings in this policy and actively work hard to ensure that diversity is celebrated and not discriminated against.

Appendix

Definitions

Equality- This is more clearly defined as equality of opportunity and outcome, rather than equality of treatment. This means treating people fairly and according to their needs as some people may to be treated differently in order to achieve an equal outcome.

Inclusive- Making sure everyone can participate, whatever their background or circumstances.

Diversity- Recognising that we are all different. Diversity is an outcome of equality and inclusion.

Cohesion- People from different backgrounds getting on well together (good community relations). There is a shared vision and sense of purpose or belonging. Diversity is valued. Relationships are strong, supportive and sustainable. Cohesion is an outcome of equality and inclusion.

Community- From the Schools's perspective, the team "community" has a number of meanings:

The schools community- the students we serve, their families and the schools' staff.

The community within which the schools is located- in its geographical community, and the people who live and/or work in that area.

The community of Britain- all schools by definition are part of it.

The global community- formed by European and International links.

Gender Dysphoria- Gender dysphoria is a recognised condition in which a person feels that there is a mix match between their biological sex and their gender identity.

Equality Website Statement

EQUALITY – **Everyone is treated equally and fairly at our schools**

We comply with the recommendations of the 2010 Equality Act and the DfE Equality Act Guidance (October 2012) also PSED compliance.

There are two specific duties, these are that schools should:

• publish information which shows compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and

• publish at least one equality objective.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) that applies to schools and which extends to all protected characteristics e.g. race, disability, religion. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, schools are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- 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.

Senior Leaders in our schools are aware of the duty to have "due regard" when making a decision or taking an action and assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.

Homophobic and Transphobic bullying

Our Schools is proactive in the prevention of homophobic and transphobic bullying. Children are taught through the RSE curriculum about different types of families and are encouraged to accept all. All staff and parents are aware that homophobic and transphobic bullying are reportable offences. In the event of any such bullying schools would record the incident in the bullying incident log and inform all parents involved.

We consider equality implications before and at the time that we develop policy and take decisions, and we keep them under review on a continuing basis.

We record our equality decision making in a logbook and review our practice with Governors on a regular basis.

Equality Target

Our equality target is to:

- Track the progress of all pupils and vulnerable groups to ensure appropriate progress is maintained.
- To maintain and accelerate the progress of pupils receiving Pupil Premium funding and ensure that Pupil Premium expenditure continues to have a positive impact on outcomes for those pupils targeted.