



# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

## 1. Commitment

- 1.1 The school is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of gender and transgender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief.
- 1.2 Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual's self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated.
- 1.3 The Equality Act 2010 makes it **unlawful** for any pupils or staff to be treated less favourably because of their age, gender, sexual orientation, special educational need or disability, race (colour, nationality, ethnic origin), religion or belief (or none), cultural or linguistic background or family circumstances, or academic or sporting ability. The school ensures that teaching does not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

## 2. Aims

- 2.1 We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community.
- 2.2 We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated.
- 2.3 We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community.
- 2.4 Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school's ethos and values, in particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy.
- 2.5 All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's equal opportunities policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

## 3. Objectives

- 3.1 Through its Equal Opportunities Policy the school will:
  - a) carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation (including The Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Employment Equality Regulations);
  - b) have a proactive agenda in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organisational response;
  - c) ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil;
  - d) ensure that pupils and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals;
  - e) ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's equal opportunities policy are dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (e.g. anti-bullying policy or disciplinary or grievance policies)
- 3.2 All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable.
- 3.3 Giggleswick promotes positive values by:
  - promoting an ethos of acceptance and respect
  - providing a curriculum free from stereotypes
  - recognising of the value of all cultures



- asserting people's rights to equality
- taking action on behalf of the disadvantaged
- making reasonable adjustments for those with specific learning needs and disabilities

## 4. Rights and responsibilities

4.1 Harassment in all its forms is **unlawful and unacceptable**. Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that threaten or undermine an individual's self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated and our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies contain clear procedures dealing with discrimination.

4.2 **Therefore, pupils and staff have the right to:**

- not be discriminated against
- make a complaint of discrimination
- know how to make a complaint and where to get help
- have their complaint listened to and dealt with promptly and in a sensitive manner
- not be victimised if they complain

**and pupils and staff have the responsibility to:**

- respect and appreciate one another as individuals
- not discriminate against others
- support other people who may be discriminated against
- report to someone responsible if they think discrimination is taking place
- not victimise anyone who makes a complaint of discrimination
- challenge offensive language and behaviour

**and parents have the responsibility to:**

- fully accept and support the school's ethos of acceptance and respect

4.3 Complaints should be made to a teacher, line manager or member of the senior leadership team.

## 5. Monitoring

5.1 The senior leadership team and all pastoral staff play an active role in the monitoring of the school's policy on equal opportunities and in responding promptly to any discriminatory behaviour.

5.2 Governors have a duty to:

- regularly review and monitor this policy
- evaluate its effectiveness in relation to complaints

## 6. Implementation

6.1 All members of the school community: pupils, staff, governors and parents are made aware of this Equal Opportunities Policy, which is published on the website. It should be read in conjunction with the school's Admissions Policy and other relevant policies such as the Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour & Exclusions Policy, School Rules (GJS Code of Conduct) and the Accessibility Plan.

6.2 The Equal Opportunities Policy reinforces the **pastoral aims** of the school and particularly as follows:

- a) To encourage pupils to fulfill their potential by providing:
  - a stimulating learning environment in which to grow
  - a wide range of educational opportunities in which to participate
  - a caring structured environment in which to thrive
- b) To prepare individuals to fill a developing and responsible role in society by encouraging self-discipline, self-respect, and respect for others, inter-personal relationships, courtesy and good manners, honesty and awareness of responsibilities to self and to others, mature mental independence.



- c) To develop self-esteem, resilience and promote physical and mental well-being
- d) To develop awareness and respect for the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of Law, individual rights and freedoms.
- e) To develop an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination and of challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values.
- f) To develop respect and understanding for persons of differing ability, gender and transgender, sexual orientation, race and background is regarded as a basis for the individual's personal and social development.
- g) To offer access to a broad pastoral curriculum specifically to ensure the avoidance of gender and transgender, ethnic and social stereotyping.
- h) To encourage mutual respect and acceptance of those with different views, faiths and beliefs.

6.3 The Promotion of the student voice is encouraged through The Equality and Inclusion Team, who meet to discuss all matters relating to equality, and who plan initiatives and events to raise awareness of equal opportunities within the school and the wider community.

#### 6.4 Meeting needs in the **curriculum**

Use is made of assemblies, chapel services, C4L (PSHCEe), RE, Drama, English and other lessons to:

- a) Promote acceptance of each other and respect for each other's position within the school community
- b) Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues
- c) Foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures and to recognise bias
- d) Understand why and how we deal with offensive language and behaviour

Opportunities for personal development are influenced by ability, disability, gender and transgender, race, sexual orientation and background, so we meet these particular needs by:

##### **a) Ability & Disability**

- There is a comprehensive and coherent system of assessment and recording, which is an integral part of monitoring and evaluating pupils' specific learning needs.
- Systems are in operation to identify pupils' needs, allocate resources to meet these needs and to ensure that appropriate teaching and auxiliary aids are available.
- All pupils should have equal access to participating in all elements of the curriculum and co-curricular programme irrespective of disability. Where it is not possible to make reasonable adjustments, a suitable alternative will be provided.
- The School has an Accessibility Plan in place which can be found on the School website and a hard copy can be made available upon request. This sets out the School's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

##### **b) Gender and transgender**



- All pupils have equal access to all elements of the curriculum irrespective of gender and transgender.
- Learning experiences are designed to develop co-operative working relationships between the different genders.
- Language used by all school staff and pupils gives equal value to all staff and pupils of all genders.
- Messages in school ensure that opportunities and life choices are not limited by a person's gender, for example in careers education.
- The school's model of tuition benefits all genders equally in terms of the quality of teaching and in terms of outcomes.
- Pupils may lawfully be separated by gender for 'gender-affected' competitive sports or activities. This applies where there is a differential in the average strength, speed and stamina of the genders at the relevant age and this is a significant factor in determining success or failure in the sport or activity. However, the school ensures provision of equivalent opportunities to play sport for all genders.

**c) Race, Cultural or Linguistic Background**

- Pupils are encouraged to understand that every human being is unique and that we share a common humanity.
- The school promotes the fact that everyone is entitled to equal rights and justice.
- Pupils are helped to appreciate that the achievements of other cultures and nations are of equal value to their own.
- Pupils should have knowledge of the history and development both of the cultural traditions to which they belong and of others to which they do not belong.

**d) Sexual orientation**

- The school aims to deal sensitively and supportively whenever pupils raise the issue of their sexual orientation.
- The school challenges homophobic remarks, which can be damaging to the self-image of pupils.
- If marriage is discussed in lessons teaching reflects the fact that marriage for all combinations of genders is part of the law in England and balanced views are presented about marriage. Pupils are encouraged to respect other people, even if they choose to follow a lifestyle that pupils may not choose to follow themselves.

**e) Background**

- The school deals sensitively with pupils of differing family backgrounds, encouraging pupils to create a caring environment around them.
- Equal value is placed on people of all economic circumstances.
- The school gives pupils the opportunity to consider the lives of others less fortunate than themselves, such as the homeless, the unemployed and those with other special needs, promoting their common humanity and enabling pupils to participate in charitable causes.

**f) Religion**

- Giggleswick has a Christian Foundation and is designated as a school with a Church of England religious character. It therefore expects all pupils and staff to support the Christian values that underpin our community life as a school, such as a sense of responsibility and open generosity towards each other and the wider community in which we live.
- All Senior School pupils, regardless of faith (or no faith), normally attend weekday Chapel but on Sundays, special permission may be granted to pupils of other faiths



who would prefer to attend suitable alternative worship if it can be found. At the Junior School a weekly assembly is given by the school Chaplain.

- Pupils should understand that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law. Through C4L (PSHCEe) and Religious Education lessons pupils develop an acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to themselves (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.

#### **g) Politics & Controversial Issues**

- Pupils are given opportunities to explore current conflicts and controversies through access to factual information from a range of sources to make them aware of the types of argument that characterise alternative viewpoints.
- The teaching of political issues in any subject or as part of the C4L (PSHCEe) programme is presented in a non-partisan way. Information and opinion is presented as open to interpretation, qualification and contradiction.
- Where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils whether in curricular or co-curricular activities the school aims to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views
- Opportunities such as general or local elections are used to hold mock elections to promote fundamental British values and provide pupils with the opportunity to learn how to argue and defend points of view.
- Visiting speakers are subject to a variety of safeguarding checks in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and prevent duty prior to their visit and during.

### **Requests for variation in the school uniform**

All pupils are required to wear a uniform, and a strict dress code operates for Years 12 and 13, as per the School Uniform and Sixth Form Dress document in the parent and staff handbook. The Head will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender identity and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the School's policy on health and safety and it is reasonable in all the circumstances, including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Reviewed by: A Simpson, Deputy Head  
JR Mundell, Head of GJS

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#### Linked Policies

Accessibility Plan; Admissions Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy; Behaviour & Exclusions Policy; School Rules; SEND Policy; Safeguarding Policy; and the Staff Code of Conduct

#### Guidance

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 and Schools (*Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities*, May 2014)