



SMITHDON HIGH SCHOOL

EQUALITY POLICY (Single Equality Scheme)

**Mr M Starling
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1. What is the Single Equality Scheme?

Smithdon High School has produced this version of the Single Equality Scheme (SES) to meet its statutory duties in relation to race, disability and gender and promoting community cohesion. The duties cover staff, students and people using the services of the school such as parents and carers.

It also addresses the legislation relating to religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. It therefore includes the school priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment in these areas.

The Single Equality Scheme enables the school to achieve a framework for action which covers all six equality strands and ensures that it meets its public sector duties and responsibilities in an inclusive way.

Smithdon High School will continue to meet its statutory duties by reporting annually (see section 14) on progress to the school's Governing Body and will cover activity undertaken in relation to the six equality strands and promoting community cohesion.

2. Meeting the Statutory Duties

Under the statutory duties all schools have responsibilities to promote race, disability and gender equality.

2.1 Race Equality

The general duty to promote race equality means that due regard must be given to:

- Eliminating unlawful racial discrimination
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting good relations between people of different racial groups
- Actively promoting awareness of the multicultural society
- Transparency in school, ie general racism in a topic
- Accessing information for English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Dealing with racist incidents:

All racist incidents will be recorded and reported to the appropriate authorities.

2.2 Disability Equality

The general duty to promote disability equality is owed to all disabled people, which means that due regard must be given to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination
- Eliminating disability related harassment
- Encouraging participation by disabled people in public life
- Taking steps to take account of the disabilities of disabled people

Accessibility:

There is specific disability legislation in relation to disabled staff, students and parents/carers and accessibility which means that the school must plan strategically over time to:

- Increase access to the curriculum
- Make improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access
- Make written information accessible to students and parents/carers in a range of different ways

The school must ensure that disabled students do not receive less favourable treatment and the school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure this.

2.3 Gender Equality

The general duty to promote gender equality means that due regard must be given to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment and
- Promoting equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys
- Promoting choice in perceived gender specific subjects
- Recording sexual harassment incidents

The duty also includes the need to consider actions to address the causes of any gender pay gap. Norfolk County Council (currently the employing body of Smithdon High School) considers that this has been addressed through the implementation of the Modern Reward Strategy and unified conditions and pay for school teachers.

Transgender:

Transgendered people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. The term transgendered refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender re-assignment and will provide a supportive environment within its school community.

2.4 Community Cohesion

The school also has a responsibility to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious and non-religious and socio-economic groups. (See also the school's Community Cohesion Statement). Priorities have been incorporated into the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan to make it easier to monitor progress and performance in meeting these objectives.

2.5 Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief

Under the new Act, the school also has a duty to ensure that it does not discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. The Single Equality Scheme also includes the school's priorities and actions to eliminate discrimination and harassment in these areas.

2.6 Pregnancy/New Mothers

The new Act also makes provision to specifically protect against discrimination of students on the grounds of pregnancy/maternity. The school will ensure that pregnant students and those who have recently given birth are provided with appropriate support and access to education during the pregnancy and with re-integration into school after the birth.

3. Aims of the School

To provide education of the highest quality, enabling all our students to develop fully their potential as learners and members of local, national and international communities.

General school aims:

- To provide high quality teaching and opportunities for learning.
- To develop self-respect, confidence and esteem.
- To engender respect for every member of the school, local, national and international communities.
- To encourage and provide every member of the school community with the opportunity to continue their progression in terms of career advancement and/or learning.
- To make a positive contribution to the local community through liaison with a wide variety of organisations.
- To strive for excellence in all aspects of our work.

To achieve these aims and enable the whole community to become part of this vision and subscribe to our values, the school will:

- Strive to make the best possible provision for all students, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin or status, gender or sexual orientation.
- Respect diversity, understanding that treating people equally is not simply a matter of treating everyone the same. The school adopts the Norfolk Inclusion Statement's view that inclusion is:

"The process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given an equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life."

This means that the school does its best to make reasonable adjustments for disability, recognise and celebrate cultural differences and understand the different needs and experiences of boys and girls.

- Understand that equality is not simply about protecting the potentially vulnerable. The school believes that all children are disadvantaged by the holding of prejudicial views and seeks to promote good relationships between all groups and positive attitudes towards disabled people, people from different ethnic or cultural groups or faith backgrounds and people of different gender or sexual orientation.
- Value its staff for their ability and potential to help it make the best possible provision for the students in the school, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin, gender or sexual orientation.
- Be proactive in its efforts to identify and minimise existing barriers or inequalities.
- Seek the views of all groups affected by the policies and work of the school and try to involve them in policy review.
- Recognise the school's role in promoting community cohesion and actively encourage the participation in public life of all learners in the school.

4. Collecting and Analysing Equality Information for Students

Smithdon High School is an inclusive school. It uses the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil his or her potential.

The following equality information regarding Smithdon High School students is collected and analysed:

- Attainment levels
- Rate of progress
- Attendance levels
- Behaviour
- Complaints of bullying and harassment
- Racial incidents
- Participation in extra-curricular activities
- Participation in the Student Council

The following data is also analysed for individual groups of students:

- Attendance at Extended School activities/extra-curricular activities (eg school trips)
- Choice of options selected
- Behaviour patterns

Data on individual performance is analysed by the Deputy Headteacher and shared widely.

5. Collecting and Analysing Equality Information for Employment and Governance

Smithdon High School is committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

Smithdon High School also aims to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and governing body which represent all sections of the community in order to provide a service which respects and responds to the diverse needs of the local population.

The following profile information for Smithdon High School staff and governors will be collected and analysed:

- Applications for employment
- Staff profile
- Governor profile
- Attendance at staff training events
- Disciplinary and grievance cases
- Staff appraisals/performance management

The following issues have been identified from this information gathering exercise to date:

- Staff profile to be updated by race, disability and gender
- Governing body profile is not collected
- Entry and exit interviews are not conducted consistently

Actions to address these issues have been implemented.

6. Consultation and Involving People

Students, staff, governors, parents and carers, as well as the wider school community were involved in creating the Single Equality Scheme. This helped to ensure that the views of potentially disadvantaged groups were fully incorporated in the development of the scheme and action plan.

Examples include:

- Discussions at School Council
- Contact with parents/carers, both formal and informal
- Staff surveys
- Discussions at staff meetings
- Discussions at governing body
- Contact with local community groups, eg Parish Council and Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel (SNAP)

7. What has been achieved so far

This section details what has been achieved so far in relation to the equality duties and celebrating the outcomes. This is only a selection of the many improvements.

Race Equality:

- A very low number of racist incidents are recorded in school.

Disability Equality:

- Lifts have been installed in both blocks which have upper floors.
- Ramps are installed at entrances to all buildings.
- Curriculum and timetable are adjusted so that disabled students (temporary or permanent) can access all areas of the curriculum.
- Teaching Assistants have been specifically trained to assist students with a variety of disabilities.
- An arrangement has been made with a local coach company to ensure appropriate transport for disabled pupils on school visits.

Gender Equality:

Gender stereotyping was evident in the selection of options by students, so information sessions in assemblies tackled gender stereotyping, for example Catering for boys or Resistant Materials for girls.

There was an identified increase in participation by boys and girls in those options usually favoured by the other gender. There are still some subjects where the 'gender divide' is obvious, such as Child Development.

Sexual Orientation:

The school challenges any member of the community who does not respect the sexual orientation of an individual. Advice is offered by external organisations and sexuality is a topic explored within Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship.

Community Cohesion:

The school has audited Community Cohesion and Cultural Diversity using the Schools Network scheme and accreditation examining the following areas:

- School ethos
- Achievement
- Curriculum
- Parent/Carer involvement
- Staff and Governors
- Specific projects and/or innovations

8. Equality Impact Assessments

Equality impact assessment is a systematic method of rigorously checking all school policies, procedures and practices to ensure they are genuinely accessible and meet the needs of the staff, students and local community in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

The school undertakes equality impact assessments to identify the impact or effect (negative or positive) of its policies, procedures and functions on various sections of the population, paying particular regard to the needs of minority groups. Where negative impacts are identified, steps are then taken to deal with this and ensure equity of service to all.

An inventory of existing policies has been undertaken and the school and the governing body reviews all policies on a rolling programme.

9. Other School Policies

Existing school policies and documents have been used to inform the Single Equity Scheme. These include:

- School improvement plan
- Access plan
- Racial incident procedure
- Anti-bullying policy
- Sex and relationships policy
- Dignity at work
- Special educational needs policy

10. Roles and Responsibilities

- The Governing Body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this scheme.
- The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of the scheme and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, receive the required training and support and will report progress to the Governing Body.
- The SENCO (to be Head of Achievement from 1.9.14) has day to day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this scheme.
- Staff are expected to promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for students with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equality issues.
- Students have a responsibility to themselves and others to treat each other with respect, feel valued and speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.
- The school will take steps to ensure that all visitors to the school, including parents/carers, adhere to its commitment to equality.

11. Commissioning and Procurement

Smithdon High School is required by law to ensure that when services are procured by the school from other organisations in order to help the school provide its services, the selected organisation will comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in selection during any tendering process.

12. Publicising the Policy

The policy is publicised in the following ways:

- School website
- Staff induction

13. Annual Review of Progress

The school will continue to review annually the actions undertaken in the development of its Single Equality Scheme, which will include:

- Results of information gathering activities for race, disability and gender and outcomes.
- Outcomes of involvement activities from minor groups.
- A summary from equality impact assessments undertaken.
- An update of the progress made against priorities.
- Celebrating what has been achieved in relation to promoting community cohesion.

The school will also revise this policy every three years.

14. Ongoing Evolution of the Scheme

The school will continue to involve people from all aspects of the school community in the ongoing evolution of its Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan. This will include:

- A regular slot at School Council meetings to discuss equality and diversity issues.
- A regular slot at staff meetings.
- Discussion of equality and diversity issues at meetings of the Governing Body.
- Ensuring that staff are available to discuss equality and diversity matters during parent consultation meetings.
- Arranging annual school open days/evenings for the wider school community to celebrate the work of students and give the opportunity for feedback.