



Equality and Diversity Procedure & Equality Objectives

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Equality & Diversity Procedure

INTRODUCTION

The Link Secondary School is committed to creating an inclusive environment, where people are treated with dignity and respect and where we anticipate and respond positively to different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential. We are committed to promoting and advancing equality of opportunity, not only because it is an important part of the mission, vision and values of the school, but also because by attracting and retaining the most diverse range of students, staff and partners, we will ensure future success for everyone.

We believe that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and without discrimination, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, circumstances or background.

As used within the OHC&AT Equality and Diversity policy, 'equality' means ensuring everyone is able to participate in all our activities.

'Diversity' acknowledges there are differences between people, which should be recognised, respected and celebrated.

The equality duty has two main parts: the 'general' equality duty and 'specific duties'.

The General Duty

The general equality duty sets out the equality matters that the school needs to consider when making decisions that affect students or staff with different protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, belief, sex, sexual orientation).

In carrying out our functions we aim to:

1. Eliminate discrimination by

Making sure systems for good communication and expression of opinion are valued in school. This includes encouraging staff to be aware of and listen to the different ways students communicate and to recognise all behaviour as communication. It also includes encouraging a coaching culture for staff so that active listening and probing questioning support colleagues to address issues and find solutions.

Providing formal opportunities to express opinions making sure these are embedded in the school, including a school council that meets regularly and considers equality objectives as part of their agenda and for staff a senior leadership open door policy where active listening is the norm. Regular surveys and discussions about school policies and practice especially related to mental health and well-being ensure an open culture where strengths and development areas are fed into whole school improvement plans.

Ensuring available resources are used to give every student good access to the curriculum and community environments. Using additional grants wisely so that students with particular

learning barriers or those who are more vulnerable have the resources they need for equal access.

Ensuring any discrimination is recognised and recorded. Discrimination is challenged for students through whole school and bespoke interventions that are monitored for impact by the senior leadership team and school SENCO. This includes the monitoring of rewards, progress data, behaviour data and end of year outcomes.

2. Advance equality of opportunity by

a) Removing or minimising disadvantages

This may include adapting equipment or the environment so that all students have equal access; the school's statutory accessibility plan aids this aim.

It also includes strategies that help to narrow any achievement gap. Person centred EHCPs ensure key strengths, barriers and needs are highlighted for students and that the most appropriate provision to help students overcome barriers are outlined. Individual and small group interventions as well as the Access curriculum lead by the school therapists ensure students receive the highlighted provision that will best minimise their key disadvantages.

Additional grants, such as the pupil premium are used wisely to get the best impact for students that may have additional socio-economic disadvantages on top of their learning disabilities. Regular monitoring from senior leads and governors ensure students receive the best possible strategies for their needs.

b) Taking steps to meet different needs

The school has a person centred learning ethos. Students are grouped by social awareness and ability with clear pathways of progression rather than age in order to ensure high levels of differentiation throughout the curriculum offer. This also ensures students receive teaching and strategies for learning that are motivating and effective.

Person centred EHCPs ensure students receive bespoke support for protected characteristics that may affect learning even if they are the only child in the school that may need a particular strategy.

c) Encourage participation when it is disproportionately low.

The school is data rich. This enables senior staff to identify students at risk of any kind of discrimination or students that are underachieving so that appropriate interventions can be put into place.

3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics

The school aims to look positively at difference and celebrate diversity. This is a strength of the spiral RSHE curriculum where students are encouraged to develop their emotional understanding, regulation and support for others.

Wherever possible diversity is openly celebrated whether that be in the school's disability awareness programme or through the celebration of traditions and festivals from the school's community.

Staff are encouraged to be proud of their differences and heritage and to role model positively for students during learning and assemblies.

The Specific Duty

There are two specific duties that the school are required to carry out. These are:

1. To publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with the equality duty, at least annually;
2. To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years.

Link Secondary Equality Objectives

Equality objectives are designed to ensure that everyone in the school community is able to participate and that differences are recognised, respected and celebrated.

Disability

Develop a provision mapping and interventions based system based on students' main learning barriers ensuring the system feeds into the Access curriculum and into curricular lessons across the school (See SENCO ACTION PLAN for success criteria) **The Link Priority Curriculum for collective learning barriers has been developed this year as well as a fairer intervention system for bespoke barriers. This is monitored and evaluated termly for impact and any ongoing necessary changes to meet personalised barriers.**

Formulate and cost a plan to update the Playground with large and small leisure resources that will reflect the needs of the wide cohort of physical and social needs in the school population. **The Covid pandemic has delayed progress with this target however a topographical survey has been completed enabling the school to be in a position to move forward with this targets in the new academic year.**

Produce and deliver training for the staff team on particular learning needs and disabilities that are becoming more prevalent within the local Community in order to prepare for the adaption of strategies and Curriculum and resourcing needs that will be required to meet the Communication needs of students in future years – including Down syndrome and ASD with high anxiety or Pathological Demand Avoidance. **Some progress has been made towards this target with training around selective mutism and PDA given to the whole staff team. Some deeper training will be required as this group of young people increase alongside training for a few other unusual neurological or medical conditions.**

Consider the changes that will be required to bring more flexibility to the timetable and Curriculum offer to enable students to have greater access to the Community to generalise their learning. Identify appropriate after school activities and residential opportunities that could be included in the additional Curriculum offer to widen the learning opportunities for students. Much work has been completed this year to ensure the school are ready to up the Community offer. The timetable for next year includes a community element for all students to help generalise academic and personalised learning targets into other settings. Sixth formers have been given choices within the Community, Leisure and Work related learning aspects of the Curriculum to increase personalisation. A variety of after school clubs are already in place and a residential activity has been booked for Key Stage 3 students for next academic year.

Race, religion and belief

Write and deliver the Sex education module in the RSHE curriculum ensuring that parents from different family and ethnic backgrounds contribute to the process so that all statutory elements are covered in a culturally sensitive way. This module has been brought into the school in a robust way in consultation with parents through a working party and parental audit. The statutory elements have been covered but have been adapted to ensure that each young person has received teaching at a level relevant to their cognitive and emotional maturity.

All Protected characteristics

The senior leadership team will provide additional support to families through regular phone calls or face to face meetings if monitoring shows that an achievement gap may be due to a protected characteristic. Careful monitoring through tutor and senior leadership phone calls to parents has enabled the school to keep up to date with changes for families through the pandemic. This has enabled us to be responsive to need in a way that has maintained emotional health of young people well on the whole. The learning from the Pandemic will be used to formalise the offer to families next year through a graduated parent support plan.

Equality Objectives Formulated: Summer 2020 Evaluated June 21

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Equality and Diversity Policy

Positive Behaviour Policy (Academies)

Curriculum Policy (Local)

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (Academies)

SEND Policy

Accessibility Plan