



# **Equality and Diversity Procedure & Equality Objectives**

*Written by: Sandy Turner  
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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**

Implement the 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.

Produce and deliver second stage training of the less common learning needs and disabilities at The Link to ensure the very best evidence based practice is embedded for these young people – with a focus for the next academic year on Selective Mutism and Pathological Demand Avoidance.

Implement the planned changes for greater community access in the curriculum, across the main school and sixth form, including the introduction of a school residential to Key Stage 3 - monitoring the changes for impact.

### **Race, religion and belief**

As part of the literacy plans to update the school reading library and schemes, ensure the books selected include a good range of material accessible to both the interests of the current cohort as well as materials that reflect the diverse nature of the school community.

### **All Protected characteristics**

Formalise the graduated parent support plan to ensure that young people who have some kind of personal development or academic gap caused partly by a protected characteristic are offered additional interventions to support their situation.

Equality Objectives Formulated: Summer 2021

### **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