

Equality & Diversity Policy

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Approved by:
College of Management
Council of Trustees

Date:

Date:

Date for next review: October 2019

History of review: January 2018: Substantial revision merging Equal Opportunities for Pupils Policy rev2 of February 2013 and Equal Opportunities Policy August 2013, this Equality & Discrimination Policy applies to **all** members of the school community.

Policy Statement

The single Equality & Discrimination Policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and Trustees of the South Devon Steiner School and College, to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community.

For our school this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community.

These include:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents/carers
- Trustees
- Multi agency staff linked to the school
- Visitors to school
- Persons coming for the purpose of interview
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At our school, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which every-one has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. This is to be irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

Definitions

We aim to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PESD). This duty establishes, in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, that public authorities are required to pay 'due regard to the need to: Eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation that are prohibited by the Equality Act; and

- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Single Equality Act combines the existing equalities legislation. Primarily these are the Equal Pay Act of 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act of 1976, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and three major statutory instruments of recent years protecting discrimination in employment on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. It also builds on the 2006 Equality Act which instigated the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The 2010 Act imposes equality duties in respect of each of the equality strands (now called protected characteristics).

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Objectives

- To ensure that all learners have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- To advance equality of opportunity by ensuring that teaching, learning and the curriculum promote equality, celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion by fostering good relations.
- To eliminate any discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To ensure that no-one is unfairly or illegally disadvantaged as a consequence of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, disability or religious beliefs.
- To recognize and celebrate diversity within our community whilst promoting community cohesion. To ensure that this policy is applied to all we do.
- To ensure that pupils and parents are fully involved in the provision made by the school.
- To ensure that within the school budget, adequate funding is provided to underpin this policy and that intervention, positive and preventative action is funded where necessary.

Good Practice at South Devon Steiner School

- The leadership of the school community will demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community.
- There is an openness of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school
- Everyone within the school community will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour i.e. through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions.
- All pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of classroom based and externally based activities
- We strive to achieve a cohesive community and expect that children respect one another and behave with respect to one another, and that their parents feel fully engaged in the school.
- We aim to enhance a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and world-wide Steiner network, for example through our international visiting students and Summer Language School programs.
- Through our policies and actions we undertake to ensure that every child and young person is healthy, safe, is able to enjoy and achieve in their learning experience, and is able to contribute to the wider community, for example through our rigorous safeguarding and child protection work and Student Council.
- We consider it prudent and sensible to maintain the practice of logging racist incidents and reporting them to the College of Management.
- We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against children, young people and adults in our school with protected characteristics, i.e. homophobic bullying.

- We also monitor and log bullying incidents, particularly those directed towards those with special educational needs.

Monitoring

South Devon Steiner School is an inclusive school, working towards greater equality in the whole school community. The Steiner Waldorf teaching methods applied, seek to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential.

The school makes regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary.

Resources are available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be through the Educational Support department.

As well as monitoring pupil performance information, we also regularly monitor a range of other information.

This relates to:

- Attendance & punctuality
- Exclusions and truancy
- Racism, disability, sexism, homophobia and all forms of bullying.

Parental involvement

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and provide specific support as required, including pastoral care. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups in order to make necessary improvements.

Outcomes

- This policy will play an important part in the educational development of individual pupils.
- It will ensure that all pupils are treated equally and as favourably as others.
- The school will make all reasonable adjustments to promote equal opportunity and equal treatment of all members of the school community.
- We are committed to meeting the individual needs of each child and will take full account of their age, disability, gender, gender-identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation in accordance with the requirements of The Single Equality Act 2010
- South Devon Steiner School is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation.

Raising awareness within the school children

South Devon Steiner School aspires to raise awareness of Equality & Discrimination within the student body. This is addressed differently across the age ranges as follows:

Early Years

- Nature stories and fairy tales
- Celebration of festivals from other cultures
- Sharing children's biographies through birthday stories
- Kindergarten 'golden rules', which set standards of behaviour towards each other, ensuring that everyone can feel safe, e.g. helping each other, being kind, sharing etc.
- Listening to other children talking about their family and close community
- Providing male and female, younger and older role models
- Bringing songs in different languages into ring time
- Adults modelling acceptance and appreciation of differences.

Lower School

- Stories form a significant part of each day and have an aspect of morality within. This enables the children to experience complex issues which they can feel, think or talk about. This underpins their moral education, and allows lots of experience of other ideas, ways of living, cultures, identities, characters, landscapes and more.
- Festivals from different cultures are celebrated.
- Children perform in front of each other regularly, giving them the sense of being on stage. This enables them to develop compassion and empathy for each other.
- We have Class 1 -3 and 4 – 8 behaviour policies which help to encourage positive behaviour, and allow children to reflect on aspects of their behaviour.
- We are an inclusive community, which helps to instil a welcoming and warm mood to other children.
- We are a school with many different nationalities, both within our students and teachers. This gives rise to understanding of difference.
- Our established Overseas Visiting Students program brings pupils (and their families) into the school from other countries and cultures, often for prolonged periods of time (such as 1 term or even 1 year). This allows home students to develop a working understanding of difference, and build relationships with people from different social and cultural backgrounds.
- We study different languages as subject lessons.
- We sing songs from other cultures.
- We have weekly assemblies which are spaces that can be used to discuss a variety of themes.

- We teach about different countries and cultures, as discrete topics, from Class 5 when UK geography is taught, moving to European in Class 6, and World geography in Class 7. In Class 8, a geography block focussing on people of the world can be taught.
- We actively try to avoid collective nouns, such as 'boys' and 'girls'.

Upper School / College

In the Upper School/College, students explore equality and discrimination across the full spectrum of subject lessons, as well as through dedicated PSHEE lessons.

- In Science, students discuss the ethics of gender discrimination in science and discoveries, look at Embryology, Reproduction, Rights and Responsibilities. They explore 'From Fertilizers to Bombs' focusing on the question of the ethical use of scientific discoveries and look at Genetics and Ethics as a Main Lesson.
- In Geography and Politics, students learn about Apartheid, bias in politics and journalism.
- In English, students study universal human rights and the UN Charter explored with civil rights movements. They also look at advertising bias through their study of media and film.
- In History, students look in depth at the World Wars.
- The student's awareness of cultural differences in French and German speaking countries is explored through language lessons. This fosters feelings of understanding and empathy for others.
- When studying French, students look at the Algerian war and carry out an exploration of perspectives from different individuals involved in the conflict. They explore and discuss gender stereotypes and discrimination, and study the biographies and work of people who challenged social norms in their time. (i.e. Christine de Pizan).
- In Philosophy lessons, students explore ideas and biases. They look at the biographies of Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, and significant people who have upheld these values in their lives and deeds.
- Sponsor/PSHEE sessions regularly involve visits from outside agencies including but not limited to:
 - Open Hearts, Open Borders - Refugees
 - Proud 2 B – LGBT+
 - Brooks - Sex education, tolerance, diversity and healthy relationships and mental health.
- Weekly Assemblies include themes connected to equality & discrimination such as human rights, animal rights, Human values and British values, UN human rights convention.

Students regularly demonstrate their understanding of equality and discrimination, and their empathy through action, including but not limited to fundraising for causes such as homelessness and refugee support.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Trustees will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan.
- The College of Management are responsible for the implementation of this policy, and will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support as needed.
- The School Leadership Team have day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this policy.
- Our staff will 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 children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues.
- All members of the school community have a responsibility to treat each other with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour. Visitors to the school are expected to adhere to our commitment to equality.

Information/advice/guidance:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- British Values Statement
- Human Values Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- SEND Policy
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education Policy
- Guidance on School Traditions, Festivals and Events
- Curriculum Policy

Compliance:

- Independent School Standards:
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/pdfs/uksi_20143283_en.pdf

References:

- Public Sector Equality Duty (PESD)
- Section 149 and Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act of 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995

- The DfE publication the SEND code of practice 0-25 years January 2015