

HERTSWOOD ACADEMY

EQUALITY POLICY

Author	Quality of Education and Pastoral Teams
Governors' Committee	Standards
Date of last review	June 2024
Date of ratification by Governors	16.07.24
Date of next review	Summer 2026
Notes	

National and Legal Context

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), gender (including issues of transgender), race or ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (applicable only to staff). The Equality Act consolidates previous individual discrimination legislation such as the Sex Discrimination, Race Relations and Disability Discriminations Acts.

NB Child Protection legislation and procedures continue to apply throughout this area and must be accorded appropriate priority.

Aims and Values

The Academy aims to provide equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards:

The core values on which this policy is based include:

- A culture of respect for others
- Promoting equality by recognising and respecting differences between people
- A community where students are well prepared for life in a diverse society

The Academy's overall approach to promoting Equality

The Academy's Equality Policy provides a framework to pursue its equality duties to have regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations and positive attitudes between all characteristics and different groups in all of its activities through tackling prejudice and promoting understanding

Through the Equality Policy the Academy will seek to ensure that no student, staff member, parent, guardians, carers, or any other person through their contact with the Academy receives less favourable treatment.

This includes the 9 protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act 2010, i.e. age, gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership.

A Cohesive Community

The Academy, which serves an increasingly diverse community, seeks to:

- Promote understanding and engagement between communities
- Encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community
- Understand and respond to the needs and hopes of all our communities
- Tackle discrimination
- Increase life opportunities
- Ensure that learning, teaching and the curriculum explore and address issues of diversity

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher

The Governors have overall responsibility for approving and reviewing this policy

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Ensuring the policy is readily available and that Governors, staff, students and their parents/carers are aware of it
- Ensuring its procedures are followed
- Producing regular information for staff and Governors about the policy and how it is working
- Providing training
- Ensuring all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying them out
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination
- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents)
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of students, e.g. children and young people in care children from minority ethnic/language or traveller communities, disabled students etc.

All Academy staff are responsible for:

- Promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in and outside the classroom
- Modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents and being able to recognise and tackle prejudice and promote understanding
- Promote equality and avoid discrimination against anyone
- Keep up to date with the law on discrimination and take training and learning opportunities

Students are responsible for:

- Supporting the Academy's equality ethos
- Sharing concerns or issues with a member of staff
- Keeping equality and diversity issues on the Student Council agenda which will recognise good practice and enable review and development
 - This could include:
 - The Behaviour Policy, specifically anti bullying, racist and homophobic bullying
 - Developing whole school rules which challenge discriminatory behaviour

Parents and Carers are responsible for:

- Complying with the Academy's expectations with regard to equality

Eliminating discrimination

To tackle discrimination in relation to the above-listed 9 protected characteristics, we shall operate within the current 8 definitions of discrimination with regard to the Equality Act 2010, as follows:

1. Discrimination by Association: where an individual is subject to discrimination because of their relation to someone who comes under a protected characteristic.
2. Direct Discrimination: where an individual is subject to discrimination because they come under a protected characteristic.
3. Indirect Discrimination: where one group of people is at a greater disadvantage than the majority as a result of a law or rule that is applied equally to everyone.
4. Discrimination on the grounds of Disability: where an individual faces discrimination on the grounds of any legally recognised disability they have.
5. Discrimination by Perception: where an individual is offended by a remark or action that is discriminatory, to whomever the discrimination is directed or no-one.
6. Harassment: unwanted conduct which is hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive and has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity.
7. Third Party Discrimination: harassment which has occurred twice and the employer has not acted despite being aware of the harassment having taken place and has subsequently taken no reasonable action to end the harassment.
8. Victimisation: treating someone unfavourably because they have taken or might take action under the Equality Act, or has helped / may help someone to do so.

In addition to this no employees will be discriminated against due to trade union membership or activities.

The Act makes it unlawful for discrimination against, harassment or victimisation of a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions.
- In the way it provides education for pupils.
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Promoting Equality

In order to meet our objectives (see Appendix 1), the academy has identified the following priorities:

- The academy will provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled pupil's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, so they can integrate wholly in all parts of academy life.
- Staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the academy will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- The academy will ensure that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying is taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly and in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- There will be differentiated schemes of work designed to meet the abilities and learning styles of all pupils.
- There is a clearly defined disciplinary system stipulated in the Behaviour Policy, which will be consistently enforced.

- The academy will increase access for disabled children and young people to the academy curriculum and will take necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, enabling them to take as full a part as possible in the activities of the academy.
- The academy will ensure there is adequate access to the physical environment of the academy.
- The academy will improve the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people. The academy will seek the views of advisory staff, outside agencies and local academies. Throughout the year, the academy will plan ongoing events to raise awareness of equality and diversity.
- The academy will consult with stakeholders to establish equality objectives and draw up a plan based on information collected on protected groups and accessibility planning.
- Equality objectives will be published at least every four years commencing on the date of the last publication.
- The academy has an Anti-Bullying Policy and a Behaviour Policy to cover the areas that are not within scope of the Equality Act.
- Regular training will be given to both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.

Addressing prejudice-related incidents

The academy is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that pupils and staff who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system.

The academy will ensure that pupils and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents from occurring.

If incidents continue to occur, the academy will address them immediately and report them through the appropriate procedure.

Individuals subject to prejudice related incidents will be invited to join our student voice committees relating to the incident. Staff will also be able to express their opinions on the process, which will be taken into account when reviewing policy.

Curriculum

All pupils will be entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need.

When planning the curriculum, the academy will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality. When teaching the curriculum, the academy will promote equality and will not subject individuals to discrimination.

The academy will develop an appropriate curriculum for all pupils in all vulnerable groups. The academy will ensure PSHE lessons are designed for pupils to develop their knowledge of the world and the importance of equality.

Employment provisions

The academy is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

As an employer, the academy strives to ensure that discrimination and harassment is eliminated in our employment practice and we actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

The academy will not discriminate against a potential employee in respect of whether to offer a job or the terms on which a job is offered.

With regards to existing employees, the academy will not discriminate against an individual in respect of the benefits, facilities and services it offers including training opportunities, promotion or dismissal (including discipline and suspension).

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit, ability and in compliance with the law.

The academy is under a duty to make reasonable adjustments in relation to disability for employees or potential employees and will ensure that staff with disabilities have access to appropriate support in the form of aids, adaptations and other specialist services and will make reasonable adjustments to arrangements or practices to alleviate disadvantage.

More information about our procedures relating to staff can be found in the following policies:

Safer Recruitment Policy

Appraisal Policy

Discipline, Code of Conduct and Grievance Policies

Enquiries about health and disability

Capability Policy

The academy will not enquire about the health of an applicant for a job until a job offer has been made, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work for the position that has been applied for.

In some instances, the academy may decide to ask necessary health questions after a job offer has been made to an individual. In such a situation the academy will ensure that health-related questions are targeted, necessary and relevant to the job applied for.

Training

All staff will receive equal opportunities training which will include disability awareness / equality. This training will be part of staff induction as well as the CPD programme.

All staff will receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

The academy will ensure that no member of staff is denied access to any form of training because of an inaccessible venue or because the provision does not account for their disability. Staff with disabilities will be actively encouraged to attend courses which will support their career progression and personal development.

Staff discipline and suspension

The academy is committed to ensuring that all staff are treated fairly and consistently and this is held to account through our staff appraisal, disciplinary, staff code of conduct, and grievance policies. Staff performance will be monitored and we expect that staff will feel able to voice complaints and grievances in confidence, trusting that the academy will deal with their grievances fully, promptly, and fairly.

Collecting and using information

The academy will collect equality information for the purpose of:

- Identifying key issues, e.g. unlawful discrimination in teaching methods.
- Assessing performance, e.g. benchmarking against similar organisations locally or nationally.
- Taking action, e.g. adapting working practice to accommodate the needs of staff who share protected characteristics.

The academy will obtain the following information from their staff:

- Recruitment and promotion
- Numbers of part-time and full-time staff
- Pay and remuneration
- Training
- Return to work of women on maternity leave
- Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disabilities
- Appraisals
- Grievances (including about harassment)
- Disciplinary action (including for harassment)
- Dismissals and other reasons for leaving

Monitoring and Reviewing Impact

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and Governors to ensure that its effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision making.

Interim reports to Governors will be included in the Headteacher's reports to Governors

This policy links to other policies and in general the principles of equality will apply to all other policies.

Concerns or complaints

If have any issues or concerns these should be raised in accordance with the Academy's Complaints Policy, which can be found on the Academy's website

Appendix 1: Equalities objectives (To be reviewed by January 2026)

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO COMPLETE ACTIONS BY	SUCCESS CRITERIA
To improve outcomes for all students including those with protected characteristics so that they make progress at least in line with expectations based on their prior attainment and ability.	<p>Continue to develop techniques to identify and record students belonging to one of the nine protected characteristics.</p> <p>Analyse the progress of all students regularly, looking at the progress of groups with identified protected characteristics and other groups, which are not protected, for example, PP.</p> <p>Report the progress of all students, including those with identified protected characteristics, and implement timely interventions where required.</p> <p>If the progress of a particular protected group is a cause for concern work will be done with this cohort as a group.</p> <p>Carry out regular quality assurance checks through the school's monitoring, evaluation and review processes, ensuring that all colleagues who are a part of this process give due regard to those groups with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Where applicable, use external examination results and internal data analysis to set up interventions to improve outcomes, reviewing outcomes for any groups for whom intervention has occurred, whether they are protected or not.</p> <p>Analyse Behaviour and Attendance data by group, including those that contain students with identified protected characteristics</p> <p>SENDCO liaison with staff, and analysis of outcomes with a view to adjust SEND status as appropriate</p>	DHT QOE/ Behaviour and Attitudes / SENDCO	Ongoing (Termly)	Students with protected characteristics make progress in line with peers

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO COMPLETE ACTIONS BY	SUCCESS CRITERIA
To enable all students including those in groups with protected characteristics, to make a positive contribution to school life.	<p>Identify students who do not participate regularly in curricular or extra-curricular activities and work with their parents to improve participation.</p> <p>Analyse school attendance data and school behavior data to identify students or groups of students where interventions will support their involvement in school life.</p> <p>Ensure that all attendance and behavior data (including exclusions data) is reported regularly to Governors, including data relating to students within groups with identified protected characteristics</p> <p>To report to parents, via the school newsletter and website, all activities that take place giving students' positive experiences, especially where these relate to equality and diversity.</p> <p>Increase the ways in which student voice is heard around equalities issues, particularly, gender, sexuality and ethnic origin.</p> <p>Increase the number of students who have the leadership opportunities within the student body, regardless of ethnicity, special educational needs, gender, or sexuality</p>	AHT Behaviour and attitudes	Ongoing Termly	Engagement of students with protected characteristics increase

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO COMPLETE ACTIONS BY	SUCCESS CRITERIA
To promote mental health and well-being so that all members of the school community are valued and supported, regardless of special educational needs and disability, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.	Develop an ethos where all members of the community respect each other, work together and embrace the diverse nature of their school community.	AHT Behaviour and Attitudes		
	Design a broad and balanced PSHE and Drop Day curriculum which will focus and support the students' well-being and give them the relevant skills to stay safe and happy in school and in their wider lives, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion and special educational needs and disability.			
	Ensure that all students across the school have equal access to group and 1:1 counselling services provided as part of the school offer.	AHT Safeguarding		
	Analyse referral data to internal and external services to ensure that any specific issues related to a group with protected characteristics are picked up and acted upon.	DHT Behaviour and Attitudes		
	Ensure that the student voice is heard in relation to policy and process around anti-bullying, especially in relation to gender, ethnicity and sexuality. Where required, specific groups – both with protected characteristics and without – will receive interventions designed to promote their health and well-being as a group	AHT Behaviour and Attitudes		

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO COMPLETE ACTIONS BY	SUCCESS CRITERIA
To develop processes around all transition points for all students, including those in groups with protected characteristics to ensure that appropriate advice, guidance and support is in place to ensure successful transition to next steps.	Ensure that all transition points are planned for all students – entry to Key Stage 3 and secondary school; transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4, including Options; transition from Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5, vocational education, or apprenticeships and the world of work; and the transition from Key Stage 5 to University, further study, Apprenticeships and the world of work. This will also include in-year admission as a transition point for any student who joins Hertswood later than September of Year 7.	AHT Pastoral AHT Careers AHT 6th Form Admissions team	Ongoing and yearly	All students are well informed of next steps Levels of NEET decrease
	At Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 we will report on and analyse all destinations data to ensure that all groups, including those with protected characteristics are receiving the highest quality advice and guidance on next steps	AHT Careers	Ongoing and yearly	
	We will ensure, where transition points lead to a student leaving Hertswood Academy, that all relevant information is passed on to their destinations to give them the best possible support in their new setting. This is particularly important for all students belonging to a group with protected characteristics and other non-protected groups such as Children Looked After.	DHT Behaviour and attitudes AHT Safeguarding	Ongoing and yearly	
	All staff are made aware of individuals at transition, including with specific needs, the best ways to support those needs and the relevant colleague to whom they should report any concerns or issues	SLT All	As required	
	SENDSCO involvement in transition processes at all stages Impartial careers and guidance advice for students Analyses of destinations data at KS4 and KS5 to include analysis of protected characteristics	SENDSCO AHT Careers DHT QOE	Ongoing and yearly	

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DATE TO COMPLETE ACTIONS BY	SUCCESS CRITERIA
To promote equal working conditions for all staff regardless of disability, race, ethnicity, sex, religion, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation or gender re-assignment	<p>Develop an equality profile for staff to assist with identifying any issues within their recruitment regime.</p> <p>Monitor and evaluate the impact of our recruitment practices</p> <p>Introduce a wide ranging CPD programme for all staff and support those from under-represented groups who have been identified as having the potential and aspiration to gain promotion</p> <p>Offer development opportunities to all staff that develop their leadership skills, targeting groups that are under-represented in our workforce</p> <p>Increase awareness of equalities, diversity and inclusion through communications and training</p> <p>Continue Well-being survey for staff to raise concerns</p> <p>Develop opportunities for new employees to undertake equality training and for all managers to undertake training in unconscious bias.</p> <p>Complete exit interviews with all staff that address issues of equality and diversity explicitly in order to improve practice.</p>	DHT R&R AHT CPD	Ongoing and yearly	Increased staff wellbeing