

# Equality Policy (Including Anti-Bullying)

Believing in Excellence means that the school has key values that all members of our school community live by. These are:

- Respect;
- Resilience;
- Responsibility.

These values apply to three important spheres of life:

- Believing in Excellence for ourselves;
- Believing in Excellence for others;
- Believing in Excellence for our environment.

Date of Policy	September 2017
Date agreed by Governing Body	September 2017
Date of next review	September 2018
Lead Member of Staff	Eamon Brennan, Assistant Headteacher

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## **1 Introduction and context**

### **1.1 Why we have developed this Equality Policy**

This Equality Policy for Cavendish School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes **all the protected characteristics** covered under [the Equality Act 2010](#) as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our School embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and health and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community –pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- foster good relations between groups and to promote community cohesion
- ensure equality of opportunity
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

It explains how we aim to respond to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

### **1.2 Our School within the wider context**

As a school we are committed to knowing our diverse community and obtain evidence analysis of information which provides evidence of the backgrounds of the members of our school community and the attainment and wellbeing of our pupils and groups of pupils. We use evidence to plan improvements that evaluate impact in or to assess benefit to our school community.

### **1.3 Our vision statement about equality**

Cavendish School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequalities, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups and we strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning. We operate inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are assessed and strategies identified for meeting those needs. We celebrate diversity and recognise that the school plays a key role in pupils' lives for contributing to and ensuring equality for all. Therefore we cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same. We believe we all have equal rights, but may have different needs which is supported through quality first provision, with additional opportunities where appropriate.

### **1.4 Overall aims of our Equality Policy**

We build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote

understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities. We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and seek to involve the whole school community in order to ensure better outcomes for all. We aim:

- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

We recognise that it is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil, prospective pupil or a member of staff by treating them less favourably if they have declared protected characteristics:

- age (for staff only)
- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

We have produced an access plan which addresses our statutory duties to:

- ensure disabled pupils participate fully in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

## **2 Our approach**

### **2.1 Introduction**

As well as working within the school's specific equalities objectives, we seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, in all aspects of school life. We seek out opportunities in and outside of the curriculum to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality.

- Valuing differences and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better.
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other.
- We foster social cohesion within our school and within our local community.
- We inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere.
- Personal and cultural identity. We provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities.
- Fairness and social justice. We develop understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society. This is promoted through a Restorative Justice approach.<sup>i</sup>

## **2.2 Teaching and learning**

We aim to provide each pupil with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual information to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement information by the protected characteristics (where possible) and action any gaps;
- Take account of achievement when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Provide a range of resources that reflects the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of the protected characteristics, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own identity and culture and celebrate the diversity within our school community, the local context and wider;
- Support parents/carers in achieving the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Encourage discussion amongst staff and pupils of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, raise expectations and the improve learning;
- Ensure that teaching is inclusive.

## **2.3 Pastoral Support for pupils**

School based support includes a School Counsellor and Time to Talk. Pastoral support incorporates partnership with external agencies such as Youth Services and All Sorts (LGBT support services).

## **2.4 Admissions**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on any of the protected characteristics. Our admissions policy is in line with the national guidelines from the Department of Education. We do not discriminate against pupils in

admissions or in day to day operations such as in the allocation of pupils to particular classes. There are a few exceptions:

- The School may treat disabled pupils more favourably than others if it prevents them being at a disadvantage.
- Age discrimination legislation does not apply to the treatment of pupils or provision of education.

## **2.5 Exclusions**

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies or variance between groups of identified pupils are resolved.

## **2.6 Religious observance**

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents/carers, where these beliefs do not pose a risk to the safety of others. We comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

## **2.7 Hiring out our premises**

Groups contravening the school values and equalities policy would not be eligible to hire any of our facilities.

## **3 Our Staff**

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and pupil teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant (unless specific requirements are intrinsic to the role) until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure. Welfare support is made available for all staff within the school.

We ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

Via the Human Resources service purchased from our HR Provider (East Sussex) we have access to advice and guidance on equalities matters relating to staff through the East Sussex on-line bulletin, bulletins and advice given by HR professionals. We make available key information to in order to support staff on the intranet.

## **4 Roles and responsibilities within our school community**

### Headteacher:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils, visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy;
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy;
- ensure staff have access to training for implementing the policy;

### Lead Member of Staff:

- partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available;
- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information;
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it;
- Take appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination;
- Work in partnership with governors to deal with breaches of this policy.

### Governing Body :

- designate a Governor with specific responsibility for Equality
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP);
- support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary;
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy;
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years.

### Senior Leadership Team

- support other staff in implementing this Policy;
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy;
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues;
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP.

### Pupils:

- be involved in the development of the Policy and understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability;
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy;
- be expected to actively support the Policy.

### Parents/Carers:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the Policy;
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements;
- be expected to actively support the Policy;
- be expected to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy;
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

### Staff:

- be involved in the development of the Policy;

- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them;
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy;
- model good practice by recognising and challenging prejudice and stereotyping;
- promote equality and avoid discrimination against anyone for reasons of ethnic or national origins, language, culture, religion or belief, disability, gender, sexual orientation or social class;
- respond to and report any equalities related prejudiced based bullying and incidents in line with school policy;
- make known any queries or training requirements.

Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies:

- be involved in the development of the Policy;
- be required to support the Policy;
- be expected to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy.

## **5 Responding to harassment, victimisation and bullying**

### **5.1 Definitions**

We recognise that hate incidents and prejudice-based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, transphobia, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. Bullying is behaviour by an individual person or a group of people that intentionally hurts another individual or group. It is repeated, deliberate actions aimed at making a 'victim' feel powerless, and can be both emotional and physical. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy defines bullying in the following way:

*Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.*

*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*

[Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, DfE, 2014](#)

We define 'Prejudice related / hate incidents' in the following way:

*This is a one-off incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's race or perceived race, gender disability, religion and / or belief, sexual orientation or gender identity. These can also include indirect prejudice driven behaviour that is not targeted at one individual. The impact of this expression of prejudice against an equality group can be damaging and must therefore be responded to as a prejudice related or hate incident.*

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind

(perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference in appearance e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore and understand the complexities of equalities issues. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We record prejudiced based incidents and prejudice based bullying. We use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our pupils, young people and communities.

### **Definitions of Type**

It is important for learning communities to be able to identify, record and monitor the different types of bullying and in particular bullying or incidents affecting those with protected characteristics as described under the Equality Act.

#### **A. Sexist**

This is based on sexist attitudes that when expressed demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Behaviours may involve suggestive sexual comments or innuendo including offensive comments about sexual reputation; or using sexual language that is designed to subordinate, humiliate or intimidate. May be referred to as sexual harassment.

Adapted from [\*Preventing and responding to sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying, Safe to Learn Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2009\*](#)

#### **B. Disability and children with Special Educational Needs**

Behaviour by an individual or group repeated over time that intentionally hurts disabled children or those who Special Needs either physically or emotionally. It can involve verbal taunts, name calling, physical injury, and damage to property, rumour spreading, shunning or ridicule. It can be manipulative, making the disabled pupil do something they should not, or deliberately engineering their discomfort or isolation. It can be done through social media (cyber bullying). Some children with SEN and disabilities may not recognise that they are being bullied or that their own behaviour may be seen by someone else as bullying. It also applies to those who are academically more or less able.

Adapted from [\*Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities; Safe to Learn Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008\*](#)

#### **C. Race/Ethnicity**

Behaviour by an individual or group repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally and makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, community, national origin or national status. It may also be because of a perception or assumption about ethnicity or culture (which may or may not be accurate), or because of their association with someone of a particular ethnicity, culture etc., (for example a parent/carer).

Adapted from [\*Bullying around racism, religion and culture Department for Education and Skills, 2005\*](#)

#### **D. Religion or Beliefs**

Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally and makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their religion, belief or lack of religion or belief. It may also be because of a perception or assumption about religion or belief (which may or may not be accurate), or because of their association with someone of a particular religion or belief (for example a parent/carer).

#### **E. Sexual Orientation**

Motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people. This can affect:

- Young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB).
- Young people who are thought to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- Young people who are different in some way – they may not act like the other boys or girls.
- Young people who have gay, lesbian or bisexual friends, or family, or parents/carers are gay, lesbian or bisexual.
- Teachers, who may or may not be lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Adapted from [Homophobic Bullying; Safe to Learn Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007](#)

#### **F. Gender**

Where children and young people are perceived not to be conforming to the dominant gender roles that may be widely expected of them, schools should be alert for signs of bullying.

Gender Identity is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes. Boys and girls may be equally affected. An individual may also experience gender identity bullying as a result of perceptions that a parent, relative or other significant figure displays gender 'variance' or is transgender.

Adapted from [Preventing and responding to sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying, Safe to Learn](#)

#### **G. Home Circumstances**

In addition to children and young people with protected characteristics there are other vulnerable groups who may be targeted for bullying or other forms of harassment and abuse. Lead Member of Staff monitor bullying related to these groups. These include:

- Looked after children
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals
- Pupils from low income backgrounds

#### **H. Appearance**

Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally and makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their physical appearance including clothes and belongings

## 5.2 Procedure for dealing with Equality Incidents

It is important to establish the child's understanding of what they have done, as well as provide an opportunity to put right the harm through restorative justice approaches.

Initially teachers (with support if required) discuss with pupils why certain language is not to be used. Pupils should be able to speak openly but also be educated on their use of language and the impact of their actions.

We want all pupils to feel welcome at Cavendish and behaviour that makes others feel bad about who they are will not be tolerated.

### A Staged Response

All staff are expected to log all incidents of prejudiced based behaviours. Weekly reports are run to look at one off incidents and establish patterns and trends. Whether first-time or if incidents are repeated by the perpetrator to the same target, the system below must be followed:

#### Stage one – Teacher/Tutor (witness)

This should be used for first-time reported instances.

The Teacher/Tutor should attempt to mediate in the following way:

- Both pupils are spoken to, there is a 'no blame' approach.
- Agree ways with the 'bullying' pupil, to improve the situation or prescribe strategies to stop the behavior
- Bring pupils together to agree a way forward for both
- Incident logged on SIMS (as a 'Prejudice Based Incident'), with notes and action logged
- Inform all relevant parents/carers

#### Stage two – Guidance Leaders

This should be used for a second incident involving the same victim.

The appropriate Guidance Leader conducts an investigation and informs all parents of the outcome. The sanction applied will predominately be;

- Detention or Isolation

Other sanctions such as Internal Exclusion day may be applied for more severe incidents

- Within one week, check with the victim and his/her parent to ensure that the bullying has stopped. If progress has been made, check again on a longer term date
- Incident logged on SIMS (as a 'Prejudice Based Incident'), with incident notes and action logged

#### Stage three – Progress Leaders

This should be used for:

- extreme cases of bullying or
- repeated incidents by the same pupil and bullying pupil

The Progress Leader conducts an investigation, including meetings with parents.

A range of sanctions may be applied including:

- Internal Exclusion
- Referral to the Police

- Exclusion from the use of public transport
- Fixed term exclusion
- Incident logged on SIMS (as a 'Prejudice Based Bullying'), with notes and action logged.
- Parents called in for a meeting

### **5.2 (a) Guidance for Pupils Witnessing/Reporting Inequalities**

If you experience or witness a Prejudiced Based incident, go and talk to a Teacher, Tutor or Guidance Leader, the identity of the witness will be kept in confidence.

### **5.2 (b) Guidance for Staff Witnessing/Reporting Prejudice Based Incidents**

Staff log the incident on SIM's themselves.

All staff who witness or are informed about any prejudiced based incidents in the School must follow this procedure:

- Staff are to challenge the prejudiced based incident and inform the pupil that the incident will be logged and passed to the relevant Guidance Leader. If appropriate, staff are to ask the pupils if they understand why the incident will be logged. Depending on the severity it may be necessary to discuss language used or have pupils removed immediately. Staff are able to bypass the 'Classroom Warnings' if they feel it is appropriate.
- A weekly report will be run to look for patterns and trends.
- If a perpetrator repeats incidents with the same victim the procedure will follow the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- If a perpetrator repeats prejudiced based incidents with different victims they will be supported with education (with parental involvement), and given sanctions for repeated behaviours (range of sanctions as outlined above 5.2).
- Termly reports will be analysed looking for patterns and trends which will be fed back to the Assistant Headteacher Inclusion for possible education within the tutor programme and the Subject Leader of PSHEE regarding integration within the curriculum.

### **5.2 (c) Guidance for Staff**

**The Guidance Leader of the Perpetrator should lead the response and ensure:**

- All incidents are dealt with as promptly as possible
- Statements are taken from the perpetrator(s) within 48 hours.
- If language contrary to equalities is directed towards another pupil/member of staff, parents/carer of the perpetrator are informed within 48 hours. Serious incidents require that parents of the perpetrator are informed on the same day.
- Perpetrator spends time undertaking equalities awareness training with their Guidance Leader and attends a restorative justice session with the victim (if applicable and appropriate) within a week of the incident occurring.
- The referrer is informed of the outcome within 48 hours if possible.
- The Guidance Leader must determine the seriousness of the incident and decide whether it is sufficiently serious to merit Progress Leader or Senior Leader intervention.

**Pupil Manager of the victim should ensure:**

- Victim gives a statement on the same day which should be passed to Guidance Leader of the perpetrator.
- Victim's family are informed on the same day.

- Victim is offered support immediately and counselling should be offered which can be on-going.

#### **5.2 (d) Staff as Targets of Inequalities Abuse**

Staff who have been subject to abuse should be offered support through counselling and SLT. The Progress Leaders/Senior Leadership Team should act as advocates to ensure the matter is resolved. A pupil apology and appropriate restoration required before re-integration. The incident is logged.

#### **5.2 (e) Parents or Community Partners as Victims of Abuse**

All prejudiced based incidents on school premises, and cyber based incidents, must be reported and recorded. Where a parent is the victim, the incident will be logged under pupil profile.

If the perpetrator is not a Cavendish pupil, the incident must still be logged and reported to the Senior Guidance Leader or Assistant Headteacher Inclusion. Parents/pupils/staff routinely victimised can also choose to complete a prejudiced based Incident Report Form.

All incidents logged are reported to the Local Authority on a termly basis.

### **6 Involving the school community in the development of our equalities practice**

The development of this policy and of our equalities objectives involves the whole school community. We endeavour to involve and listen to a wide range of individuals and groups.

- Our pupils
- Our staff
- Our school governors
- Parents/carers
- Minority, marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups
- Our partners in the community

### **7 How we identify our equalities objectives**

In line with our statutory duties we publish annually equalities information and publish and report on equalities objectives. We have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty.

Our equality objective-setting process has involved gathering evidence as follows:

- from equality impact assessments (or other process for reviewing the potential impact on decisions made in schools)
- from the following data; RAISE online data, incident reporting data, and from involving relevant people (including disabled people).

In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways and other people help us to do this. Governors regularly monitor our safeguarding audit. OfSTED inspectors visit us regularly and report on equality issues during our inspection. We collect a range of information relating to

incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, sexual orientation, faith, disability and gender.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil/learner voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously. Monitoring of information is by Year Group and by Type (as outlined in 5.1). This information is then used to inform curriculum development within PSHEE.

In East Sussex there are a range of services which support the equality agenda and help us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school, including Local Authority Support Services.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, such as Targeted Youth Support, Children's Services, We are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

## **8 Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

This policy was first published on {fill in once ratified}. It is actively promoted and disseminated via our school website.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

We will report annually to Governors, on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

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<sup>i</sup> Restorative Practice starts with a premise that people will be happier, more cooperative and productive when they are worked 'with' by those in a position of authority, rather than 'done to' or 'done for'. The process is geared towards respect for individuals, repairing or minimising harm to relationships, and empowering those involved to find ways forward for themselves