



*Making a Difference*

Phoenix Park Academy



# Equality Policy

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WELLSPRING  
ACADEMY TRUST

## Equality Policy

This policy reflects the **Equality Act 2010** which harmonises and replaces previous legislation including the **Race Relations Act 1976**, **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**, **Gender Recognition Act 2004** and **Sex Discrimination Act 1975**. The policy supersedes all previous school policies on Disability, Ethnicity (i.e., Race) and Gender. Through this policy Phoenix Park Academy and Seven hills Academy will fulfil its public duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in connection with disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual identity, and where appropriate, age discrimination. (applicable to employees only). The guiding principles in this policy refer to all individuals and therefore are equally applicable to students, staff, governors in addition to visitors to Phoenix Park Academy or Sevenhills Academy..

### Legal framework

Duties as identified in the **Equality Act 2010** and its Schedules. There are nine equality strands (known as Protected Characteristics):

- disability;
- ethnicity (including Gypsy and Traveller groups);
- gender;
- gender identity and transgender;
- faith, religion and belief;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- sexual orientation (homophobia);
- pregnancy and maternity;
- age.

Each relates to direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

Phoenix Park Academy and Sevenhills Academy will seek to achieve positive action in respect of the **Public Sector Equality Duty** which came into force on 5 April 2011, and will publish relevant information on the school's website:

- (i) Equality Information;- for schools with more than 150 employees although this does not currently apply to our schools.
- (ii) our Equality Objectives ;- and to monitor, and report upon these annually.

It should be noted that all schools have a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Duties, and failure to do so could result in legal action against the school's Governing Body.

Employees of the school acting on behalf of the Governing Body are also liable for their own discriminatory actions.

## **Introduction**

Our schools value the individuality of all of our students. We are committed to giving all our students every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of students' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all students. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our students matter. This policy is intended to help to ensure that we promote the individuality of all students, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

Phoenix Park Academy and Sevenhills Academy is opposed to all forms of prejudice that could act as a barrier to achieving our legal duties and a cohesive community.

These include:

- disability;
- special educational needs;
- racism and xenophobia;
- gender and transgender;
- religious groups and communities;
- Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
  
- Sexism and homophobia.

## **Aims and objectives**

1. We do not discriminate against anyone, whether they are staff, student, parent or visiting community member on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.
2. We promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We recognise that doing this may entail treating some students differently.
3. We seek to ensure that all students have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
4. We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups.
5. We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
6. We challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.

7. We value each student's worth, we celebrate the individuality and cultural diversity of the community centred on our school, and we show respect for all minority groups.

8. We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are caused by poor self-image and by ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes, and respect for all.

### **Good Practice**

1. We strive to achieve a cohesive community and expect that students respect one another and behave with respect to one another, and that their parents feel fully engaged in the school.

2. We aim to enhance a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and the World communities.

3. We support the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, the **UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities**, and the **Human Rights Act 1998**.

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.

4. We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against students and young people or adults in our school with protected characteristics, e.g., homophobic bullying. We also monitor and log bullying incidents directed towards those with special educational needs and those on the grounds of race.

### **5. Guiding principles**

In fulfilling the legal obligations and establishing our school ethos, we are guided by the following principles:

#### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value**

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled,
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status,
- whatever their gender or gender identity,
- whatever their sexual identity.

#### **Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference**

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which students may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;

- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are met.

**Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes, relationships, a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

Our policies, procedures and activities promote:

- positive attitudes and actions towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people;
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice related bullying and incidents;
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

**Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development**

Our policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment, promotion and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status;
- whatever their gender and sexual identity and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

**Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- gay people, transgender people as well as heterosexual.

**Principle 6: We consult and involve widely**

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. Consultation involves:

- disabled and non-disabled;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- gay people, transgender people as well as heterosexual.

### **Principle 7: We address prejudice and prejudice related bullying**

We oppose all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties listed above:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs;
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed against religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- prejudice reflecting sexism or homophobia.

### **Principle 8: Society as a whole should benefit**

Policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled and non-disabled;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- gay people, transgender people as well as heterosexual.

### **Principle 9: Objectives**

Each year we formulate and publish specific and measurable equality objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published, in relation to:

- disability;
- ethnicity, religion and culture;
- gender.

### **Arrangements, Roles and Responsibilities**

1. The equality objectives for Phoenix Park Academy and Sevenhills Academy will be reviewed annually, and refreshed on a four year cycle.
2. The equality employment information will be monitored and reported to the Governing Body on an annual basis.
3. We will undertake Equality Impact Assessment (Equality Analysis) exercises when renewing or reviewing policy or practice to ensure full compliance with the Equality Act 2011.

### **Curriculum**

4. Curriculum information will also be evaluated by looking specifically at equality groups in addition to the standard analysis conducted by the school and adjusted as appropriate to ensure that all groups of learners are supported positively.
5. All other data relating to whole school monitoring will encompass scrutiny of equality information so that groups of learners are supported positively.
6. When they are reviewed, each curriculum subject or area will ensure that teaching and learning will reflect our Guiding Principles as set out above.

### **Staff and Governors**

7. The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

8. The Heads of Centre are responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

9. All staff are expected to:

- adhere to this policy;
- promote equality and inclusion in their classrooms, amongst colleagues and with visitors to the school;
- deal with any prejudice related incidents that may occur;
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect our Guiding Principles ;
- provide and analyse quantitative and qualitative data that supports better understanding of equality groups and any issues that may arise, e.g., attendance, bullying, exclusion;
- undertake or support Equality Impact Assessment (Equality Analysis) processes;
- attend appropriate training that enables us to keep up-to-date with equality issues.

12. All staff and Governors have access to training which discusses and explains the concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion. We value the opportunity to take a holistic approach in fulfilling our Equality Duties.

13. All staff and Governors will exercise their Safeguarding responsibilities in relation to equality matters and ensure that any bullying or challenging of Human Rights is addressed immediately.

14. The governing body collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. The governing body will check that all students are making the best possible progress, and that no group of students is underachieving. To do this, they will monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parents' and students' questionnaires.

### Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governors will therefore:

- monitor the progress of students from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other students in the school;
- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at Phoenix Park Academy or Sevenhills Academy is discriminated against;

- require the Executive Principle to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or students regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's behaviour policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that students from minority groups are not unfairly treated.
- provide and analyse quantitative and qualitative data that supports better understanding of equality groups and any issues that may arise, e.g., attendance, bullying, exclusion;
- attend appropriate training that enables the school to keep up-to-date with equality issues.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if it is considered necessary.

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