DOROTHY STRINGER SCHOOL
EDUCATION FOR LIFE

Equalities Policy

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Equalities Policy introduction

Dorothy Stringer School is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment in which every member of the school community is treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

We value diversity and recognise that people have different backgrounds, experiences, identities and needs. We are committed to ensuring that these differences are respected and celebrated and do not become barriers to participation, achievement or wellbeing.

We are committed to meeting our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty by:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Fostering good relations between different groups within our school community.

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including students, staff, governors, parents/carers, contractors, visitors and partner organisations.

This policy should be read alongside the following:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Anti-bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy and Procedure
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Wellbeing Framework
- The most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

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

Our vision

Dorothy Stringer School strives to foster a welcoming, respectful and inclusive environment where discrimination, prejudice and inequality are challenged.

We recognise and value both the similarities and differences between individuals and groups. We seek to ensure that every member of our community is able to participate fully in school life and achieve their potential regardless of background, identity or circumstance.

We aim to:

- Promote mutual respect and understanding.
- Encourage positive relationships.

- Celebrate diversity.
- Support inclusion and belonging.
- Resolve conflict peacefully and constructively.
- Ensure equality of opportunity for all.

We seek to enable our students to learn free from harassment and confrontation, and to resolve conflicts peacefully.

Our school within the wider context

As a school we are committed to having knowledge of our school community and frequently analyse data which provides evidence of the backgrounds of the members of our school community and the attainment and wellbeing of our students and groups of students. We use this data to plan improvements that will benefit our school community.

School Profile as of September 2026

- Cohort of 1,639
- 27.58% children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM)
- 19.46% of students are registered either SEN Support or in receipt of an EHC Plan
- On the IDACI (Indices of Deprivation Affecting Children Index), Dorothy Stringer is deemed to be 'average'.
- Just over a fifth of our intake live in the bottom third of deprived areas in Brighton and Hove.
- Students from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds make up 24.9% of the school population.
- The school supports students with a range of gender identities and ensures that all students are treated with dignity, respect and in accordance with Equality Act protections.
- Children with physical disabilities have appropriate provision (please see accessibility provision; regularly reviewed).
- The school has a small number of GRT children (Gypsy, Roma, Traveller).
- The school staff is comprised of a varied range of people, reflecting the increasingly diverse nature of Brighton and Hove.
- We are an accredited 'school of sanctuary' working within Brighton and Hove's Sanctuary City status.

Overall aims of our Policy

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create a cohesive community where everyone feels a sense of belonging. We welcome 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. The aims of this equality statement are:

- To promote understanding of and respect for others whatever their ability, race, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion or beliefs

- To promote greater awareness of the effects of discrimination
- To prevent racism, sexism, negative attitudes towards disability and other discriminatory practices through challenging any form of discrimination
- To ensure equality of access to the workplace, curriculum and extra-curricular activities for all students and staff in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011
- To celebrate and affirm the diverse nature of the whole school community through both curricular and extra-curricular activities

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality

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

- age (staff only)
- sex
- race
- disability (physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities)
- religion or belief or no belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity
- marriage or civil partnership (staff only).

Our duties

We recognise and accept our duties to eliminate discrimination and promote equality, including the requirement to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all. This policy is based on:

- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
- Department for Education guidance: Equality Act 2010 Advice for Schools
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) legislation
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirements.

Equality Objectives (2026-2030)

The school will:

Objective 1

Monitor attainment, attendance, behaviour and exclusion data to identify and address any significant inequalities affecting groups of students.

Objective 2

Provide ongoing staff training to promote understanding of equality, diversity, inclusion and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Objective 3

Ensure that incidents of discriminatory language, harassment, bullying and prejudice are identified, recorded, responded to and reviewed effectively.

Objective 4

Promote a curriculum that reflects diverse perspectives, experiences and contributions and supports positive relationships and community cohesion.

Progress against these objectives will be reviewed annually and published in accordance with statutory requirements. Equality objectives will be reviewed at least every four years.

Roles and responsibilities

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

Our Governing Board will:

- Ensure compliance with equality legislation.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.
- Review equality information annually.
- Review equality objectives at least every four years.
- Hold school leaders accountable for implementation.

Our Headteacher will:

- Lead implementation of this policy.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training.
- Monitor equality-related information and incidents.
- Report regularly to governors.
- Take appropriate action where discrimination, harassment or victimisation occur.

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- Support implementation of this policy.
- Monitor equality outcomes.
- Promote inclusive practice across the school.
- Support staff in responding to equality-related issues.

Our school staff will:

- Promote equality and inclusion.
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- Follow school procedures for reporting concerns.
- Model respectful behaviour.
- Participate in relevant professional development.

Our students will:

- Treat others with respect.
- Follow the school's behaviour expectations.
- Report incidents of bullying or discrimination.
- Contribute positively to an inclusive school environment.

Our parents and carers will:

- Support the aims of this policy.
- Work collaboratively with the school.
- Raise concerns appropriately where they arise.

Definitions and examples of discriminatory behaviour

Racial discrimination

Racism is not just about intentional attitudes or behaviour; a lack of intention does not stop the impact of racism being felt by individuals and communities. It is important to recognise that racist incidents are often complex and interrelated with other events and may involve group as well as individual behaviour. Racism is a learned belief system or ideology, premised on the superiority of particular racial groups with power relationships and systems set up to favour these groups.

Disability discrimination

Discrimination against people with disabilities takes many forms, and barriers are often created within society which makes it more difficult for disabled people to reach their full potential or to have equal access to the services they need.

Sex discrimination

Discrimination based on sex can affect both men and women, is linked to stereotypes and may include the belief that one sex is intrinsically superior to another.

Other protected characteristics

Discrimination based on gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation is linked to stereotypes and these characteristics, whereby someone is treated less favorably than another person without these characteristics.

Examples of how discrimination may manifest itself (this outlines the most common forms of discrimination, but does not constitute a complete list)

Bullying

- Name calling, discriminatory jokes, offensive mimicry
- Offensive graffiti, damage to property
- Physical intimidation or attack
- Incitement of others to behave in a discriminatory manner
- Verbal, online or written threats

Disrespect

- Disregard for proper pronunciation and use of names
- Devaluing an individual's language, culture, sex or abilities

Exclusion

- Being non-cooperative with people because of their race, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion or beliefs

- Making general assumptions about an individual because of their race, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion or beliefs
- Having false or low assumptions about an individual because of their race, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion or beliefs Inclusion or exclusion in activities on race, sex or disability
- Refusing to employ or promote individuals because of their race, sex, gender reassignment, disability, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- Failure to ensure the curriculum reflects the diversity of the school community

Communication

- Discriminatory terms in the course of discussion
- Abuse of personal property
- Bringing in racist, sexist or other discriminatory materials
- Discriminatory text messages
- Downloading and passing on of discriminatory materials

Employment

- Refusing to consider the needs of fathers who wish to adapt their working practices due to the need to be the principal child carer
- Planning CPD in such a way that part-time employees (statistically more likely to be women) cannot access it

Curriculum

- Allowing stereotypical images to persist in the delivery of the curriculum

Our students

Issues of diversity and equality form the basis of many curriculum areas such as PSE, RSE, RS and Citizenship and in our tutor and assembly programmes. We have participated in the BAME mentoring project with the University of Brighton, alongside working with the local authority to develop student of colour focus and support groups facilitated by trained school staff.

Students are able to comment, put forward ideas and challenge school procedures and statement via our Student Voice representatives.

We involve and consult with the parent/carers of our students regarding equality agendas.

Our students are integral in how we design and share the reporting process for prejudiced-based incidents with our student community so they can be followed-up by staff appropriately.

Our staff and Governors

All school staff are regularly consulted to monitor the effectiveness of the school approach to ensuring equality for all. Equality/Diversity are a focus of our continuing professional development programme.

How we identify issues and prioritise our actions

Key to this process will be the implementation of regular consultation and reviews, to collect information about ourselves. Other people also help us to do this. Ofsted inspections consider how effectively the school promotes an inclusive culture and meets the needs of all students.

We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender.

We complete a Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) which constantly monitors the make-up and needs of our staff and students – and assessing how well we are meeting those needs.

We value more qualitative information which may be given to us through a variety of methods, including those passed on anonymously through surveys such as the Safe and Well at Schools survey, undertaken by all our students every two years in November.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. For example, we receive regular support from: local health partners, RUOK (substance misuse), Sussex Police, the Traveller Education Service and English as an additional language (EAL) Service.
We have established good links with our local and wider communities; we welcome them into our school. By listening to those within our community and our partners, we continually improve our approaches.

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and administrative staff) from discrimination. 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 will 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.

Responding to prejudiced-based incidents

We recognise that prejudice-based harassment or bullying behaviours are driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, ageism or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

All prejudiced-based incidents are thoroughly investigated and causes identified; staff will adhere to and follow the procedures as outlined in the behaviour policy.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our students to better understand the diversity that exists in society.

We will record all prejudiced-based incidents and report these to the Local Authority. We and the Local Authority will use this information to identify trends and patterns, to provide appropriate responses to incidents.

Appendix A: Equality legislation and duties

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 provides the legal framework that protects individuals from discrimination, harassment and victimisation and promotes equality of opportunity. The Act brought together previous equality legislation into a single legal framework and applies to schools in relation to students, staff, parents/carers, governors, contractors and visitors.

Dorothy Stringer School is committed to ensuring that no individual is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic and that all members of the school community are treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following protected characteristics:

- Age (staff only)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (staff only)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The school will take proactive steps to ensure equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all members of the school community.

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

As a public body, Dorothy Stringer School is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

In exercising its functions, the school must have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate Discrimination

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

Advance Equality of Opportunity

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

This includes:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by those with protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the differing needs of individuals and groups.
- Encouraging participation in activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Foster Good Relations

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by promoting understanding, respect and positive relationships throughout the school community.

Equality Information and Objectives

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require schools to:

- Publish information demonstrating compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Publish one or more measurable equality objectives.
- Review equality information regularly.
- Review equality objectives at least every four years.

The school's Equality Objectives are included within this policy and are reviewed and updated in accordance with statutory requirements.

Reasonable Adjustments

Dorothy Stringer School recognises its duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, staff and visitors.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Adaptations to policies, procedures and practices.
- Changes to teaching approaches and learning materials.
- Provision of auxiliary aids and support services.
- Accessible communication formats.
- Physical adjustments where appropriate.

The school's Accessibility Plan outlines how access to education, facilities and information will continue to be improved over time.

Types of Unlawful Conduct

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits the following forms of unlawful conduct.

Direct Discrimination

Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination

Applying a provision, criterion or practice which disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic and which cannot be objectively justified.

Harassment

Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Victimisation

Treating someone unfavourably because they have made, supported or participated in a complaint or investigation under equality legislation.

Discrimination Arising from Disability

Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected to their disability where such treatment cannot be objectively justified.

Failure to Make Reasonable Adjustments

Failing to take reasonable steps to remove barriers experienced by a disabled person.

Positive Action

The Equality Act 2010 allows schools to take proportionate positive action where there is evidence that people who share a protected characteristic:

- Experience disadvantage.
- Have particular needs.
- Participate in activities at disproportionately low levels.

Any positive action taken by the school will be lawful, proportionate and designed to improve equality of opportunity and outcomes.

Monitoring and Review

The school will continue to monitor the impact of its policies, practices and procedures to ensure compliance with equality legislation and to promote inclusion across the school community.

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated in response to legislative changes, statutory guidance, local circumstances and emerging best practice. Equality objectives will be reviewed at least every four years.

Appendix B: Consultation and review

The school looks to conduct a considered way of determining whether a statement, practice or project will affect all groups equally or whether it potentially may have a disproportionate impact on one or more particular groups.

Such reviews should help us ensure we are not unlawfully discriminating against certain individuals or groups and that we are promoting our positive duties on equality. It is a way to ensure we are meeting the diverse needs of all our students, staff and other key stakeholders and to help ensure that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life. It is a process of thinking that is included in the review of policies as part of the statement review cycle and is considered for all new policies and specific projects. It is not about more paperwork but is a common-sense approach to thinking through how policies and actions will impact on race, disability, gender and other equality areas (positive, neutral or negative).

If the impact on different groups is not justifiable, the school will seek solutions to overcome this situation. We believe that involving the children, young people, staff and members of the community who may be affected by the statement, practice or project provides the best opportunity of identifying impact, exploring solutions and supporting implementation.