



Equalities Policy



Southampton Hospital School

Equalities Policy

Introduction

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer. We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive ethos and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers as well as the medical staff who are involved with our students whilst they attend the hospital school.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture.

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), disability, health, race, gender (including issues of gender identity), maternity and pregnancy, religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status (applicable only to staff).

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998. September 2015 Manual of Personnel Practice Equality and Diversity/Model Policies/Model School Equality Policy.

SHS Equalities Policy			
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Contact	Nell.Giles@SouthamptonHospitalSchool.co.uk	Effective date	September 2019

School Context

Southampton Hospital School is an Alternative Provision Academy based at Southampton General Hospital. Our school is focused on enabling pupils with medical needs to access education and we are organised into three key areas to accomplish this: the General Hospital Wards, Bursledon House residential unit & our Medical Outreach Provision. Across our service, we offer a broad and balanced curriculum to meet the individual needs of each pupil. Every child will benefit from quality educational time both on a one to one and small group basis. We also liaise with mainstream schools to gather information enabling us to provide continuity for each child's study programme. We are committed to working hard to minimise the effect on children's education of their stay in hospital, and ensure that they feel as happy and supported as possible when being taught in class or at bedside.

We believe that all children with medical needs are entitled to excellent educational, pastoral and spiritual support during a period of their lives when they are unable to attend their home schools. We believe that all pupils have a right to an enriching and stimulating curriculum delivered by teachers who are passionate about the provision. We are committed to working as part of a multi-disciplinary team to support young people either on their return to school within the framework of a smooth transition process or to identify the best provision post discharge. As a team we believe in the provision of education based on individual pupils' needs and delivered within a caring and compassionate atmosphere. Equality of access and opportunity is central to all that we do, and we make it our aim to ensure all students receive the very best teaching available, regardless of their particular medical needs and status of their health whilst they are with us. As well as medical needs, equality of opportunity is provided regardless of any protected characteristics: students' age, ability, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief.

Principles

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value

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

- Whether or not they are disabled or suffering from a period of poor health
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and gender identity
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age
- Whether or not English is their first language

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or pupils may face at any given time:

- Disability and health – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made to guarantee equality of access and opportunity

- Gender (including gender identity) – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women and young people who are non-binary or gender neutral have different needs
- Religion and belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with
- Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers
- Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference
- Marital status – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have
- Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes and interaction between groups and communities different from each other
- an absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics
- an observance of good equalities practice in relation to staff
- confidence that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff remain relevant throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

6. We consult and invite involvement to ensure views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including pupils who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting pupils, we will take account of views expressed at school council; for parents, through questionnaires, exit surveys and regular meetings with the head teacher, and for staff, through staff governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum offer foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Our current equality information regarding staff can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement. We are unable to publish equality information regarding the current student body due to the transient nature of our intake.

9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7). The objectives can be found at the end of this policy statement and take into account both national, county and school level priorities. We will set ourselves new objectives every four years, but keep them under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- The delivery of the school curriculum
- The teaching and learning within the school
- Our practice in relation to pupil progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our partnership with health professionals within the hospital
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to pupils, their families and staff
- Our policies and practice in relation to pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers
- Our partnership working with mainstream partner schools and stakeholders
- Our contact with the wider school community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and pupils are recorded and dealt with appropriately. A record of all incidents is kept at both the school and the Trust.

Roles and responsibilities

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 and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The Headteacher, Nell Giles, is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice

- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons
- support pupils in their class who have additional needs

Equalities Information

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, gender, gender identity, age, pregnancy and maternity, marital status, sexual orientation, religion and belief and sexual orientation).

This information should also be read in conjunction with our equality objective(s). In compiling this equality information we have:

- identified evidence of equality we already have within policies and practice and identified gaps.
- examined how we engage with the protected groups, identifying where practice could be improved.

We have also involved staff, pupils, parents and others in the following ways:

- parent questionnaires
- involvement of the student council
- staff survey
- contact with parents representing pupils with particular protected characteristics
- questionnaires sent to mainstream schools who refer to SHS for outreach provision
- contact with the local community
- discussion and regular meetings with health professionals within and attached to UHS

Equality Objectives

Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objective(s):

Objective 1: To further involve and evaluate the views of parents, students (through the school council) and health professionals within the hospital when reviewing and evaluating our equalities policy and practices.

Objective 2: To further develop teaching and opportunities within the curriculum that will prepare children for life in a diverse society including fostering respect for the differences between people.

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<i>Objective</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>To be completed by</i>	<i>Monitoring</i>
<p>To further involve and evaluate the views of parents, students (through the student council) and health professionals within the hospital when reviewing and evaluating our equalities policy and practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and amend as necessary parent questionnaires • Create a programme of regular open evenings and parent information events to encourage greater parental involvement within and opinions around our equalities provision • To consult parent views during Friday review meetings • To create a regular equalities agenda item for the school council • To attend Bursledon House governance meetings • To hold regular HELM meetings • To maintain regular contact between staff and health professionals in all areas of the provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head teacher and teaching staff – open evenings • School Council • Head teacher to evaluate effectiveness of parent questionnaire • All BH teaching staff to attend open evenings • Head teacher to establish schedule of regular Friday afternoon parent meetings • GD and head teacher to chair HELM meetings • Head teacher to attend BH governance meetings • Head teacher to pursue appointment of parent governor 	<p>Ongoing monitoring</p> <p>School council minutes reviewed termly</p> <p>Open evening feedback collated half termly</p> <p>HELM minutes reviewed half termly</p>
<p>To further develop teaching and opportunities within the curriculum that will prepare children for life in a diverse society including fostering respect for the differences between people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate children's attitudes to diversity regularly and plan appropriate action. • Audit curriculum resources and content to ensure that they reflect community diversity. • Celebrate diversity in the local community eg., visitors and events. • Review provision of religious studies and PSHE curriculum to ensure teaching reflects the needs and composition of students and the community • To use current affairs presentations to promote values of equality and inclusion and celebrate diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NG/GD/VG to audit curriculum provision with focus on RS and PSHE • NG to provide current affairs presentations • All staff to ensure teaching takes opportunities to celebrate diversity and establish values of equality 	<p>Ongoing monitoring</p> <p>Curriculum audits and reviews</p> <p>Headteacher's report to FGB to include teaching of diversity and personal development</p> <p>Evaluation and review process will be ongoing.</p>