



South Hams Federation

Equality and Diversity Policy

Approved by: Tess Coulthard	Date: July 2023
Last reviewed on: July 2023	Next Review due: July 2024

Equality Policy

The South Hams Federation wants to be recognised as a group of schools that sit in the heart school of their communities, providing an inclusive, safe, caring and stimulating environments in which to learn.

Equality Statement

At the South Hams Federation, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents, and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith, religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At the South Hams Federation, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach, and visit here.

Legal Duties

At the South Hams Federation we welcome our duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#). The general duties are to:

- eliminate discrimination,
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

We understand the principal of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity. Protected characteristics make up the part of a person's identity that makes them who they are, such aspects or characteristics are protected from discrimination. Everyone in Britain is protected from unlawful behaviour by the Act.

The protected characteristics are as follows:

- age
- disability
- race
- sex
- gender reassignment
- maternity and pregnancy
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership (for employees)

At the South Hams Federation we will:

- Publish Equality Information - to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions

(We will not publish any information that can specifically identify any individual)

- Prepare and publish equality objectives which we will review on an annual basis
- Consult all our stakeholders in the development of our equality objectives and report on progress against our objectives on an annual basis

To do this effectively we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as schools, but we will also analyse available data relating to the context of our local communities, including hate crime data and demographic information. In relation to each schools provision, we will pay particular attention to the following functions:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Attainment
- Exclusions
- Prejudice-related incidents
- Curriculum
- Complaints/compliments

Our objectives will detail how we will ensure equality is applied to the services listed above, however where we find evidence that other functions have a significant impact on any group, we will include work in this area.

We recognise that our work on equality is central to the successful promotion of fundamental British values, especially in relation to the values of respect and tolerance and the rule of law. We will therefore ensure that our Federation curriculum helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. We will work proactively to address all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including derogatory and discriminatory language. We will mainly do this through the delivery of our statutory RSE / PSHE Curriculum. We will also utilise all other subject areas to foster positive relations and to ensure that we consciously cultivate opportunities to challenge stereotypes and support positive identity development for all our pupils. We will regularly audit our resources, displays, lesson content, and assessment processes to ensure that they meet the needs of all groups. We will scrutinise outcomes across a range of measures, analyse the results and address any identified areas of concern.

In endeavouring to fulfil our legal duties, we will:

- Recognise and respect diversity
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging
- Observe good equalities' practice, including staff recruitment, retention, and development
- Aim to identify, reduce, and remove existing inequalities and barriers
- Consult and involve widely
- Regularly review our progress

Definitions

Discrimination is unfair treatment towards another or a group of individuals who share one or some of the protected characteristics.

Direct Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than others because of a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by Association occurs when someone is treated less favourably because someone they are associated with, such as a friend, family member or carer, has a protected characteristic.

Direct Discrimination by Perception occurs when someone is treated less favourably because someone believes they have a protected characteristic, regardless of whether their perception is correct or not.

Indirect discrimination can be more difficult to identify and sometimes is not intended. It can occur due to a lack of understanding of the law or a genuine error of judgement about an individual. For example, a policy that is applied to all individuals equally may inadvertently disadvantage individuals or groups who have a protected characteristic. It is therefore essential that all aspects of school life and policies are scrutinised carefully to avoid any unlawful provision, criterion, or practice.

Victimisation occurs when an individual has either raised a complaint or grievance that they have been discriminated against based on having a protected characteristic; or has supported someone who has raised a complaint or grievance.

Harassment is any form of unwanted behaviour intended to violate an individual's dignity or create an environment which may be described as hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive. The victim will be subject to this harassment based on a protected characteristic or the perception that they have a protected characteristic, or because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Prejudice can be conscious or unconscious and involves stereotypes, prejudgements, and beliefs (which are usually negative) about an individual, or group of people, based on a protected characteristic.

Roles and Responsibilities

We believe that promoting Equality is the whole federations responsibility.

School Community	Responsibility
Governing Board	Involve and engage the whole school community in identifying and understanding equality barriers and in the setting of objectives to address these. Monitor progress towards achieving equality objectives. Publish data and publish equality objectives. Ensure that staff have access to appropriate training and resources.

Executive Headteacher	<p>As above including:</p> <p>Promote key messages to staff, parents, and pupils about equality and what is expected of them and can be expected from the school in carrying out its day-to-day duties.</p> <p>Ensure that all in the school community receive adequate training to meet the need of delivering equality, including pupil awareness.</p> <p>Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents.</p>
Equality & Diversity Lead	<p>Assist with the recruitment shortlisting process by reviewing applications, challenge and discuss any reasons for candidates who may not be considered to shortlist for interview stage.</p> <p>Complete the 'unconscious bias' form for candidates who have been unsuccessful and not been shortlisted adhering to the SHF Equality and Diversity policy.</p>
Heads of School	<p>To support the Executive Headteacher as above</p> <p>Ensure fair treatment and access to services and opportunities. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents.</p>
Teaching Staff	<p>Help in delivering the right outcomes for pupils.</p> <p>Uphold the commitment made to pupils and parents/carers on how they can be expected to be treated.</p> <p>Design and deliver an inclusive curriculum.</p> <p>Record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents.</p>
Non -Teaching Staff	<p>Support the school and the governing body in delivering a fair and equitable service to all stakeholders.</p> <p>Uphold the commitment made by the Head of School on how pupils and parents/carers can be expected to be treated.</p> <p>Support colleagues within the school community.</p> <p>Record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents.</p>
Parents/Carers	<p>Take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and in informing the governing board of actions that can be taken to eradicate these.</p> <p>Take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment given to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.</p> <p>Uphold the commitment made by the Head of School on how pupils and parents/carers, staff and the wider school community can be expected to be treated.</p>
Pupils	<p>Support the school to achieve the commitment made to tackling inequality.</p> <p>Uphold the commitment made by the Head of School on how pupils and parents/carers, staff and the wider school community can be expected to be treated.</p> <p>Report prejudice-based incidents to a trusted adult.</p>

Local Community	Take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and in
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School Community	Responsibility
Members	Informing the governing body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these Take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment made to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.

We will ensure that the schools communities are aware of the Equality Policy and our published equality information and equality objectives by publishing them on the school website.

Preventing and Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

We define prejudice-based incidents/bullying in the following way:

Prejudice-related incidents/bullying - derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is, or because they have a learning or physical disability. It may include misogyny or misandry and be sexist in nature. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior.

At the South Hams Federation we encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. This schools are opposed to all forms of prejudice, and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice- related discrimination may fair less well in the education system. We recognise that prejudice-based bullying is a form of child-on-child abuse and is therefore a safeguarding concern, as outlined in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#). We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse. We are committed to working with families and outside agencies to proactively prevent incidents and to create an environment in which all members of our school community feel welcomed, accepted, and safe. We believe every member of our communities should be treated with respect and should not be subjected to prejudice or discrimination in any form. This includes staff, parents/carers, governors/trustees, and visitors to our schools.

We provide both our pupils and staff with an awareness of the impact of prejudice to prevent any incidents. We will endeavour to proactively tackle all forms of prejudice by ensuring our curriculum is representative of all sections of society and the contributions made by people with different characteristics are consciously embedded across all subjects. In doing so, we will challenge stereotypes and work towards inclusivity and identity-safe classrooms where everyone feels validated, accepted, safe and a sense of belonging.

If incidents still occur, we will address them immediately ensuring that appropriate levels of support are provided to those affected; that we thoroughly investigate all reports/allegations; and that we will apply appropriate sanctions and address offending behaviours through a programme of education. All adults in our school communities are expected to

comply with the school's Code of Conduct. Any allegations made against staff will be investigated in line with our policies and procedures relating to staff conduct and behaviour. Any staff member/parent/carer, governor or visitor to the school, who is subjected to prejudice-based abuse can also expect to have their complaint thoroughly investigated and will be supported in accordance with their wishes.

We review our practice following each incident including what more we might do to prevent further incidents. We recognise that we must not become complacent and will regularly evaluate satisfaction levels in respect of how we have responded to any reports or concerns raised.

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Pupils, Including Bystanders/Witnesses

We talk about trusted adults regularly in the schools to remind our pupils of who they can report concerns to. The definitions of **victim**, **perpetrator** and **bystander** are clarified to all pupils regularly to develop a shared understanding.

- We emphasise the importance of all pupils (whether a victim or a bystander) reporting concerns of bullying or bullying behaviour to a member of school staff - this can be any member of teaching or non teaching staff, including a class teacher, a teaching assistant, the head teacher, a lunchtime supervisor, or a member of the office team.
- The member of staff will listen to the pupil and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported.
- The member of staff will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted.
- The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.
- Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

Parents/Carers

We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to hear that their child has been the target of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying.

We ask that parents/carers report their concerns directly to the schools rather than discussing them with other members of the school community, either in person or online.

The following steps will be taken to investigate:

- Initially, we ask parents/carers to contact their child's class teacher (in person/via telephone call/via year group email) to explain their concerns.
- The class teacher will take an initial note of the concerns but may ask to schedule a meeting to allow for more time to discuss these in detail.
- The school's Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed if the allegation is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

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Following an allegation

- The class teacher will make a formal record of this on the school's recording system (CPOMs).
- An investigation into the allegation will be carried out and appropriate follow-up actions identified and

taken.

Our schools remain committed to supporting pupils and their families in all instances of bullying and relational conflict and will respond to reports promptly. Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

School Staff

Our staff work closely with our pupils and therefore may notice a change in a pupil's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a pupil or a member of the school community. If staff have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or are concerned that a pupil is displaying behaviours that may show they are the target of bullying or perhaps perpetrating bullying, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, following the procedures outlined above in the 'Parents/Carers' section.

Complaints

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow the school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website, and by request from the school office.

This policy is available on each school's website.

Linked Policies

Behaviour policy / Safeguarding policy/Social media Policy/Recruitment policy

Monitoring and Review

As a minimum, we will review our objectives in relation to any changes in our federation profile at least every three years. Our objectives will sit in our overall school improvement plan and therefore will be reviewed as part of this process.

Useful Links:

- [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- [Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\) | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](http://equalityhumanrights.com)
- [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\) | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](http://equalityhumanrights.com)
- [The Human Rights Act | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](http://equalityhumanrights.com)