



The Equality Act 2010

Altwood School's Equalities Procedures and Objectives

'I have come that they may have life and live it in all its fullness' John 10:10

Date last reviewed: Autumn term 2024

Responsibility: Headteacher

Review Period: Biennially

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation of people on the grounds of protected characteristics – disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and age.

It also requires public bodies such as schools to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**
- **Advance equality of opportunity**
- **Foster good relations between people from different equality groups**

Considering equality issues must influence the decisions reached by schools – such as in how they act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review their policies; how they design, deliver and evaluate what they offer and how they commission and procure services from others.

Schools have a responsibility to:

- Publish equality objectives by 6 April 2012 and every four years thereafter
- Publish information annually from 6 April 2012 to demonstrate their compliance with the general Equality Duty
- Publish information relating to their employees and others affected by their policies and practices

Their published information should include:

- Information on the effect that policies and practices have had
- Evidence of the analysis undertaken
- Details of the information used in that analysis, and
- Details of engagement with people with an interest in the aims of the duty.

This information must be published in a way that is accessible to the public

This document focuses on the outcomes that matter to the people who use our school and its services and our local community; and to ensure that our services are accessible and delivered effectively.

We need to be able to demonstrate what we have done and what we plan to do to improve opportunities and outcomes for pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school. Our success in meeting our objectives will be monitored and delivered through the governors' evaluation procedures and school improvement and self-evaluation processes.

Equality Information

We maintain confidentiality and work to the principles set out in the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to protect personal data. We publish information in a way so that no student or staff member can be identified. The data can be found under our **Equalities Information Document** which is updated in line with the guidance.

Altwood School's Vision and Aims for Equality and Diversity:

'To treat everyone fairly so that all members of the school community are free to learn, work, grow and flourish'.

The school is committed to:

- Tackling discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religious belief and age
- Positively advancing equality, inclusion and diversity.
- Creating deep relationships rooted in integrity and understanding between all groups by race, gender/gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religious belief and age.
- Promoting personal growth, reflection, spirituality and equality of opportunity for all.

We aim to ensure that

1. Every pupil irrespective of race, disability, gender, religion and belief or sexual orientation is able to achieve high standards
2. Strategies are in place to tackle under-achievement
3. Every pupil has access to the necessary teaching and support required to enable them to achieve their best
4. The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair, effective and equitable
5. Adults working or volunteering are, wherever possible, from diverse groups. We believe that this provides good role models for our pupils
6. We meet the needs of people from all ethnic backgrounds and of all religions or beliefs, of all ages, of all genders and sexual orientations and of all abilities.

We will approach equality issues by:

1. Paying **due regard** to equality and diversity issues within all our key policies, planning, decision making processes and performance management
2. Ensuring that our Christian vision and values are the foundation of our improvement planning, contributing towards our equality objectives
3. Ensuring that arrangements are in place to monitor and report on our progress against our objectives
4. Ensuring that we engage effectively with our learners, staff and parents in planning, delivering and monitoring the objectives

Race

We will take all necessary measures to prevent and tackle racial harassment and assist our learners to live in freedom from harassment and to feel safe as they enjoy and achieve throughout their time at our school.

Under the duties of the Equality Act we:

Tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Keeping accurate records of all ethnic groups, their backgrounds and needs and how we respond to them
- Dealing with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and notify complainants of the outcomes and action taken. Keeping records of any racist incidents.
- Encouraging dialogue between different racial groups

Advance equality by:

- Expanding access and achievement across all communities and in all areas of school activity
- Promoting the active participation of minority communities in shaping the future of our school
- Consulting with ethnic minority learners and staff on issues affecting them rather than with people acting on their behalf
- Ensuring the school staff, learners and their families as well as the wider community fully understand the principles of race equality and good race relations

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Promoting activities that celebrate our common experience as well as those that recognise diversity.
- Encouraging learners and families of all ethnic groups to participate fully in all aspects of school life
- Fostering understanding and respect for the cultures and faiths of all our learners and their families.

Disability

Our aim is to advance disability equality across all areas of the school, to disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and other school users. Under the duties of the Equality Act we:

Tackle unlawful discrimination against people with disabilities by:

- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes and behaviours. Role models within the staff encourage tolerance and acceptance.
- Making the environment as safe as possible
- Monitoring and eliminating discrimination and disability-related harassment.
- Improving the School's environment to ensure disabled learners can take advantage of education (Refer to our Accessibility policy)

Advance equality for people with disabilities by:

- Removing barriers to accessibility. This helps the school to promote equality of opportunity between people with disabilities and other people.
- Increasing the extent to which disabled learners can participate in the school curriculum.
- Providing appropriate support, assistance and care to disabled learners.
- Supporting disabled learners, staff and carers according to their individual need.
- Taking steps to meet people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment
- Consulting disabled learners, their families and disabled staff in the changes that affect them, rather than with people acting on their behalf
- Monitoring staff and learners by disability.

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Promoting positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and increasing the inclusion of positive images of people with disabilities across the curriculum– through the role models we have at School and actively working with families and students.
- A VI Paralympian was chosen to officially open new Sixth Form accommodation and worked with parents, staff and students during his visit. We believe this encourages participation of people with disabilities in school life.

Gender

We are committed to working for gender equality and give due regard to the need to:

Tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender
- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes – such things are tackled through the school's Behaviour Procedures, PSHE programme and use of appropriate sanctions.
- Making the environment as safe as possible – the school is well-lit with equal provision of personal and changing facilities, drop-in health consultations and counselling.
- Challenging antisocial or bullying behaviour against, or harassment of girls, boys, women and men and empowering staff and students to report any harassment.

Monitoring staffing and pay by gender

- Foster good relations and cohesion by:
- Promoting equality of opportunity between men and women by regularly reviewing our procedures and through an annual report to the Governors from the Headteacher which analyses and evaluates the recruitment and opportunities offered for promotion across all members of staff
- Increasing the use of positive images of women and men, girls and boys across the curriculum
- Encouraging the equal participation for all in all aspects of school life

Religion and Belief

We are committed to working for the equality for people based on their religion, belief and/or alternative world views and give due regard to the need to:

Tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Monitoring and eliminating unlawful discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief e.g. through clearly articulated and regularly reviewed procedures for anti-bullying and behaviour sanctions
- challenging antisocial or bullying behaviour on the grounds of religion, belief or non-belief e.g. ensuring that all students follow a religious education course wherein different beliefs and lifestyles are acknowledged, taught and discussed.

Advance equality in all our functions by:

- Removing barriers which prevent children and adults participating fully at school. There is accommodation given to students for the purpose of prayer, religious dress and festivals such as Ramadan, to ensure neither their faith nor learning are compromised at school.

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Encouraging the equal participation of people of all religions, beliefs and non-belief in all aspects of school life. E.g. Themes for the Weeks acknowledge all major religious festivals during the year; staff are allowed to take leave during times of major festivals or religious events e.g. there have been examples of both Hindu and Sikh funerals which required a colleague to take paid leave for longer than usual

There are few occurrences of discriminatory or bullying behaviour based upon faith or religion and the whole-school take up of RE and attendance at assemblies, suggests we do not need to include an objective for this element.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

We respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation. We value all Gods' children. We give due regard to the need to:

Tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of homophobia within the school e.g. through the school's behaviour management procedures and by acknowledging that all students and staff have the right to individual sexual preferences.
- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes and homophobic language
- Challenging bullying behaviour on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity
- Dealing with complaints of discrimination and harassment and empowering staff and students to report any discrimination and harassment.

Foster good relations and cohesion by:

- Assessing the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality e.g. Governors annually consider the policy and procedures in support of Sex Education and Relationships, as well as procedures to support student health and well-being. The Headteacher's Report to Governors contributes to this.
- Confidential counselling is available to both staff (off-site) and students, and this offers a supportive route for individuals who struggle with aspects of their gender identity.
- Promoting equality of opportunity between men and women e.g. through the Headteacher's Annual report to Governors: an analysis of staff opportunities, promotions, professional development and INSET allows for any poor practice to be challenged and addressed.
- Providing staff and students with a voice by running advocacy groups on such issues as gender identity in school.

Currently there are no mechanisms to garner information about the sexual orientation and gender identity of staff and this means there is no formal engagement with relevant community groups.

It is not an aspect of the school's work which is deemed to be vulnerable and no objective for work in this aspect is felt necessary.

Age

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for younger and older people. We believe that younger and older people have the right to equality of opportunity and that they make a significant and valuable contribution to the community at large. The school acknowledges the legislation by which there is no longer a formal retirement age.

We tackle unlawful discrimination by:

- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes and language
- Dealing with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily

We foster good relations and cohesion by:

- working with local charities who support the needs of the elderly and promote charitable volunteering for students to raise their understanding and awareness.
- Increasing the inclusion of positive, non-stereotypical images of people of all ages.

It is not an aspect of the school's work which is deemed to be vulnerable and no objective for work in this aspect is felt necessary.

Anti-bullying

Our school states clearly that all forms of bullying and discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated; we value all Gods' children. We have set out the measures that our school takes to address bullying and discriminatory incidents in our anti-Bullying procedures. We monitor and submit data regarding bullying and discriminatory incidents as required. The LGC reviews annually any bullying data including any racist and/or sexual harassment incidents.

Staff are aware of their responsibility to respect others through the school's Code of Conduct. The code of conduct is sent to all new members of staff upon accepting a job offer with us. Existing staff are asked to reread the code of conduct at the start of every academic year and sign to say they will abide by it. Failure to acknowledge and to belittle the rights of others results in disciplinary procedures. The importance of reporting any such harassment is emphasised in the Code of Conduct and is implicit in staff contracts.

An objective to remind staff of their responsibilities and to make everyone aware of the need to report incidents of homophobia, racism, disability harassment, sexual and gender bullying, and religious harassment will be met through distribution of the Equalities Objectives (this document).

Employment Practices

In our school we observe the principles of equal opportunities in how we employ, develop and treat our staff. To this end the following policies and supporting procedures are followed:

- i. Safer recruitment policy
- ii. Human Resources policy
- iii. Equal Opportunities policy
- iv. Staff disciplinary policy
- v. Pay procedures
- vi. Appraisal
- vii. Grievance policy

An analysis of staffing and recruitment is considered by Governors in the Headteacher's Annual report to Governors.

Due Regard

Under the legislation we are required to pay **due regard** to equalities when planning and implementing policies, functions or procedures. Examples of policies / practices that we consider include:

- School Improvement plan
- Admissions and Transfer
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Curriculum
- Uniform
- Health and Well Being
- Discipline
- Careers/work experience
- Anti-bullying policy
- School trips

Equalities Objectives

This section summarises the objectives we have identified to eliminate discrimination and harassment and advance equality in relation to gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

- 1. Ensure opportunities are offered to skilled and talented staff whilst implementing strategies to retain the breath of appropriate skills and expertise and the stability to ensure high standards are maintained.**

Through robust school improvement planning, we are committed to ensuring high quality continued professional development for all members of staff. The explicit promotion of lifelong learning ensures that personal and professional development nurtures, motivates and secures growth for all of our school community to flourish.

- 2. Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities to address and report incidents of homophobia, racism, disability harassment, sexual and gender bullying, and religious harassment.**

Safeguarding and inclusion is central to practice across the school. Our Christian vision ensures that all practice in the school promotes the importance love, compassion and kindness for all in our community. The command of 'Love thy Neighbour' teaches us to celebrate diversity and to value all God's children. Safeguarding procedures ensure that all staff are clear how to identify, address and report any discriminatory behaviour.

- 3. Encourage equal participation for all in all aspects of school life by actively promoting opportunities fairly in and out of lessons and through other media to which all students have access.**

Opportunities for personal development are broad at Altwood School. The strategic aims of the school demonstrate a deep commitment to ensuring that all young people are able to 'learn on a wider map'. Curriculum development and co-curricular opportunities provide multiple pathways for all students to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural learning without any barrier.

Date of Publication of Equalities objectives Autumn 2024

Roles and responsibilities

The Local Governing Committee accepts their responsibility to promote equality and eliminate discrimination and harassment, as outlined in the objectives.

For Altwood School, the Local Governing Committee:

- Ensures that the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and pays due regard to equality issues when reaching decisions
- Intends to monitor the delivery of the school's Equality Objectives
- Will ensure that all members of staff understand the importance of the Objectives and their role in delivering them through training and staff development

Contracting and Procurement

We will:

- Include equality requirements within the contracts for services procured by the school.
- Monitor contractors' commitment to implementing equal opportunities standards within employment and service delivery.

Publication

The School's Equality Objectives are published and are available to all on our website.

Complaints

If a member of the public feels that they have suffered harassment or been treated unfairly by the school because of their sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic group, regional or national origin, age, marital status, disability, political or religious belief, sexual orientation or class, they should report this through the school's complaints procedure.

Complaints by staff will be dealt with under our Grievance or Dignity at Work Policies, as appropriate. We take all external and internal complaints seriously and will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour. Complaints about staff will be investigated using our complaint procedures.

Monitoring complaints is also another way of gathering information to see whether we are meeting our equality duties. We will report on complaints annually and on action taken.