

Stowmarket High School Equality and Diversity Charter

Stowmarket High School will adhere to all equalities legislation, including the three duties outlined in the Equalities Act 2010:

- To eliminate conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- To foster good relations across all characteristics.

Underpinning our approach

Understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for those people who have protected characteristics within school, while celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community is the key to our approach. People with protected characteristics are defined as those who may be susceptible to discrimination because of their:

1. sex,
2. race,
3. disability,
4. religion or belief,
5. sexual orientation,
6. gender reassignment,
7. pregnancy or maternity,
8. less able or socio-economic background.

These include pupils, students, teaching and support staff, parents, carers, governors, multi-agency staff linked to the school, visitors to school and contractors.

We value diversity and believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and governors to ensure compliance with and implementation of the Charter by the whole school community, as well as, eliminating all unlawful discrimination. Visitors to the site will be expected to follow the principles laid down in this Charter.

Assistant Headteachers (responsible for personal development and behaviour) have a role in promoting work in this area to ensure the achievement of the equalities objectives. Responsibilities include the monitoring and reporting of racist, disability-related and homophobic incidents to the senior leadership team and the evaluation of progress towards these objectives, monitoring the operation of the Charter and reporting back through the school's management structure.

The associated equality and diversity action plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis with the continued help of pupils, students, parents, carers, governors, the community and staff.

Promoting Equality and Diversity at Stowmarket High School

Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, learning and teaching will endeavour to:

- Ensure equality of access to the whole school experience for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;

- Use materials which reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes, values and skills which challenge discriminatory behaviour;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture, religion and beliefs and to celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions;
- Develop pupils' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, and challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality;
- Ensure that the curriculum covers issues of equality, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion;
- Prepare pupils for living in a multicultural society and promote good relations between different racial groups;
- Celebrate diversity and promote (where appropriate) the positive contribution of different ethnic minority groups to the curriculum area, as well as profile the positive contributions made to society by other minority groups;
- Celebrate what we have in common;
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that involve all pupil groupings;
- Take account of the composition of individual teaching groups;
- Take account of the different learning needs of different groups of pupils, using an appropriate range of teaching strategies to enable all pupils to progress;
- Utilise seating plans to foster effective learning;
- Take account of the current performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils;

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, race, disability, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes for all our young people, we recognise the importance of:

- Teacher commitment, expertise and enthusiasm as a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils;
- Adults in the school providing good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality and diversity;
- The school as a whole placing a high priority on the provision for those with special educational needs and disabilities. We strive to meet all pupils' learning needs, including the more able;
- The school providing an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources;
- Creating an environment where all pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning;
- Encouraging pupils and parents to create an appropriate learning environment at home and providing them with advice about how to do this;
- Using a range of teaching methods throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.

Curriculum

At Stowmarket High School we actively recognise differences and aim to ensure that:

- Our planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross-curricular themes, promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity;
- Pupils will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality;
- Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to mainstream curriculum by taking into account the cultural and lifestyle backgrounds of all pupils, their linguistic needs and their learning styles;
- All pupils have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression.

Ethos and Atmosphere

We are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community. To this end:

- There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere and mutual respect which welcomes everyone to the school;
- The pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school, and adults within the school, with friendliness and courtesy;
- The displays around the school should be of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of school life and are frequently monitored;
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within Stowmarket is a high priority. These resources will:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society;
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints;
- Show positive images of different ethnic groups, males and females in society, and people with disabilities;
- Reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context;
- Include materials to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues;
- Be equally accessible to all members of school community, consistent with health and safety
- Not promote, explicitly or implicitly, racist, anti-disability, sexist, homophobic or ageist views.

Language

We recognise that it is important that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes;

- Does not intentionally offend;
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document;
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self-esteem;
- Recognises the individuality and background of all members of the school community, with everyone endeavouring to spell and pronounce names correctly;
- Uses appropriate terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals.

Provision for Bilingual/Multilingual Pupils

We have a relatively small cohort of students who are bilingual, multilingual or who join us with no English. We will make appropriate provision for all EAL/bilingual children/groups to ensure access to an appropriate curriculum. These groups may include:

- Traveller and Gypsy Roma children;
- Those from refugee families;
- Asylum seekers;
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language;
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom.

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Pastoral staff take account of disability needs, gender, religious and racial differences, sexual orientation and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils;
- All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender or race;
- All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support as appropriate when they experience or perceive discrimination. We also recognise that the perpetrators of discrimination are themselves sometimes victims of their personal circumstances and therefore, where appropriate, remedial work is done to ensure that the actions do not occur again;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community;
- Emphasis is placed on the value diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of the school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour. It will address this duty in a number of different ways, e.g.:

- Incidents where there are unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) will be tackled. The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender);
- All bullying related to those with protected characteristics will be referred to an appropriate member of staff and be dealt with as a serious incident - and will be recorded and investigated thoroughly;
- Incidents involving those with protected characteristics - specifically incidents relating to race, disability or homophobia - will be highlighted in behaviour logs in order to ensure effective monitoring. It will be the norm for parents/carers of the victim and the perpetrator to be notified of the incident, unless there are specific circumstances that make this inappropriate.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential. For example:

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school; readathon, parents' evenings, transition events;
- Encouraging parents/carers to contact the school if they have any concerns about equality and diversity issues - the first point of contact should be the member of Senior Management with responsibility for Equality and Diversity;
- Encouraging members of the local community to regularly join in school activities e.g. for example parent forums.

Staffing and Staff Development

- We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This will include pupil access to a balance of male and female staff at different key stages.
- We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised formally.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure good practice which takes account of equalities through the recruitment and selection process.
- The school encourages applicants from all sections of the community.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions.
- All supply staff are made aware of equalities policies and practices.
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.
- As part of the staff recruitment process all applicants are asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. Summary information will be reviewed by the Governors Personnel committee.

Responsibility for the Charter

At Stowmarket, all members of the school community have a responsibility towards supporting the equality agenda. Responsibilities are laid out as follows:

Waveney Valley Academy Trust:

- The school complies with Waveney Valley Disability Equality Policy

The School Committee is responsible for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community and the Waveney Valley Disability Equality Policy;

- The school's Equality and Diversity policy is maintained and updated regularly;
- Those procedures and strategies related to the Charter are monitored, reviewed and implemented.

The Headteacher and Senior Management along with the school committee is responsible for:

- Providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Overseeing the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and its associated duties;
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the Equality and Diversity Policy and that this is in line with Waveney Valley Disability Equality Policy;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability and sexual harassment and discrimination.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Not discriminating on grounds of any protected characteristic.
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school or Local Authority or recognised training provider.

Monitoring and Review

This will be carried out by the Equal Opportunities Group under the leadership of the designated member of Senior Management. They will report back through the school management structure and the School Improvement Plan evaluation. Amendments may be made to the Charter and action plans in the light of the monitoring and review. The group will consider feedback from a range of sources including:

- Analysis of attendance and truancy figures;
- Analysis of exclusions;
- Incidents of racism, homophobia and sexism and all forms of bullying;
- Pupils' achievement data for particular groups compared to National and Local Authority data;
- Feedback from parents, student leadership and other attached groups
- Any other information related to the Equalities Act.

The Measurement of Impact of the Charter

An action plan will be drawn up to enable impact assessment to be undertaken.

Stowmarket High School will keep up to date records concerning the disabilities present within the school community and will collect this information through data collection annually. The school will publish any objectives: i.e. steps towards addressing concerns identified by this process annually.

The Headteacher has oversight of all policies before they reach the school committee, and it is they who will ensure that no policy receives final signatory until it has been viewed through the lens of the Equality and Diversity Charter.

(Next objectives July 2021.)