



# POLICY COVER SHEET

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INCLUSION POLICY

**Last Reviewed** – November 2021

**Next Review** – November 2022

**Review Information** – Annually or following a change in legislation

Read and signed by

**Richard White, Chair of Managing Council**

**Date:**

# POLICY REVIEW

## REVIEW JOURNAL

Version	Approved By	Revision Date	Description of change	Author
V1	AM/ManCo	April 2011	First version; Equality Act 2010	
V2	AM	September 2011		DM
V3	AM	March 2013		SMT
V4	AM	February 2014		SMT
V5	AM	March 2017	ISI Regs	SMT
V6	AM	October 2017		SMT
V7	HM/ManCo	September 2019		HM/LTE
V8	HM/ManCo	November 2021	Reviewed by relevant staff. Check through of corresponding forms and paperwork. Merged Equality and Inclusion Policies	LTE/HM

## DOCUMENTS & GUIDANCE REFERED TO IN REVIEW

Document/Guidance	Date
Education and Inspections Act 2006	November 2021
The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 (January 2015)	November 2021
The Equality Act 2010	November 2021
Human Rights Act 1998	November 2021

# EQUALITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

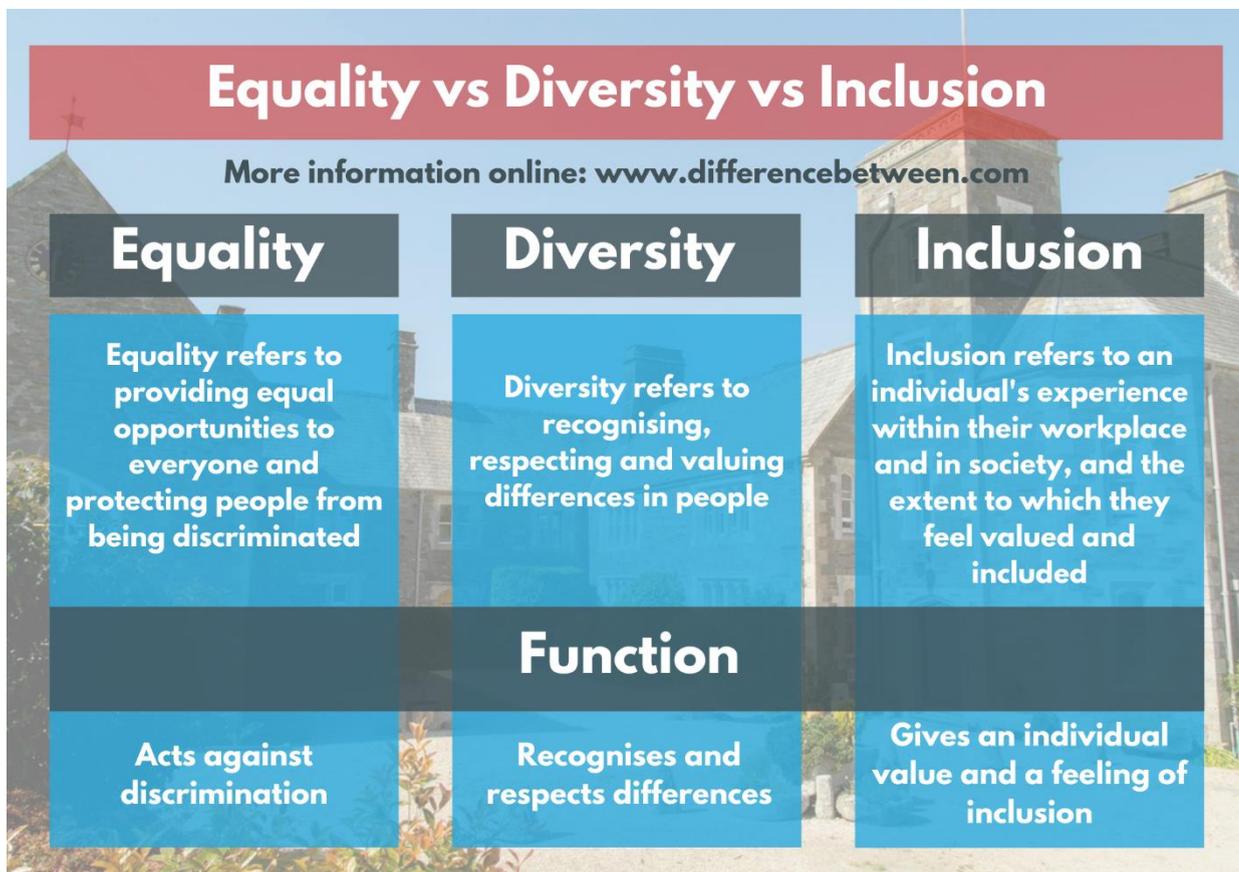
*This Policy is applicable to all pupils, including EYFS, Boarding and After School Clubs.*

*This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:*

- *Accessibility Plan*
- *Admissions Policy*
- *SEND Policy and Offer*
- *Behaviour Policy*
- *Anti-Bullying Policy*
- *Complaints Policy*
- *EAL Policy*
- *Staff Code of Conduct*
- *Staff Recruitment Policy*
- *Staff Induction Policy*
- *Performance Management Policy*
- *Child Protection Procedures and Policy*
- *Life Skills Policy*
- *SMSC Policy*

## EQUALITY & INCLUSION

The difference between equality, diversity and inclusion are illustrated in this diagram:





Polwhele House is committed to giving equality of opportunity to all members of its community, both students and adults. We celebrate the diversity of our community members and recognise, respect and value difference. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to know that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

Polwhele House School prides itself on being an inclusive, tolerant organisation and a diverse community; it is firmly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all current and prospective members of the community. It is committed to providing an environment that is free from unlawful or unfair direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religious beliefs or other personal characteristics but aims to create the conditions whereby pupils and staff are treated solely on the basis of their merits and potential.

## **AIMS**

Polwhele House School aims to:

- Promote the concept of equality of opportunity throughout the whole school community;
- Deal with incidents where there has been breach of this policy promptly and in a sensitive manner;
- Strive to create an environment that is free from harassment or intimidation;
- Develop an understanding of, and promotion of, human equality and equal opportunities;
- Promote good relations and celebrate the diversity between members of different racial, cultural and religious beliefs, linguistic backgrounds and communities;
- Make provision for and monitor the particular needs of gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, age and SEND;
- Enable pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships with others and to challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs;
- Ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve;
- Remove any barriers to learning and participation which can hinder or exclude individuals or groups within the school community.
- and also in the light of statutory changes or when an incident has occurred which necessitates a change to policy and procedures.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

The SMT and pastoral staff play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the Equal Opportunities and Inclusion Policy, for delegating responsibilities and tasks to other staff, and for ensuring that the policy is known and understood by staff, pupils and parents/carers. They are supported in this by the Managing Council.

The Director of Studies is responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the curriculum. All staff are responsible for following the policy and reporting any incidents involving a breach of the policy to the Head or another member of SMT. Any incidents of racist or homophobic bullying or sexual harassment amongst pupils will be taken extremely seriously and must be



dealt with appropriately. The matter must be reported to the Head or another member of SMT. Procedures outlined in the Anti-Bullying Policy will then follow.

All staff have a legal duty not to exclude, bully or otherwise harass other staff. For allegations of bullying and harassment, staff should refer to the Capability, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

## **ADMISSION OF PUPILS**

The School admits pupils following taster days which help judge whether the pupil will thrive at Polwehe House; those who are applying for scholarships are tested and/or interviewed. An individual's race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social background do not form part of this selection process. The School's main criteria for selection is that a pupil should be able to flourish at Polwehe House School and that the School is able, by making reasonable changes to facility provision and by appropriate support, to provide adequately for their needs.

The School welcomes applications from pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and refers parents/carers to the Admissions and SEND policies.

## **PUPILS**

The School is committed to full educational inclusion (see SEND Policy). Pupils have equal access to the programmes of study throughout the School, according to aptitude and ability.

All subjects have equality of opportunity at their core.

School rules and the Staff Code of Conduct forbid discrimination on the grounds of race, culture, religious, gender, sexuality and ability/disability.

Positive attitudes and awareness development for equality of opportunity are specifically taught through the Life Skills programme.

## **ACCESS**

Owing to the nature of the school buildings, not all rooms are fully accessible. Where necessary, the rooming timetable will be adjusted (whether temporarily or permanently) in order to allow all pupils and staff full equality of opportunity.

## **MONITORING**

Polwehe House School now monitors its Equal Opportunities Policy annually. As part of that process, the School invites all parents/carers of candidates for entrance examinations, together with all parents/carers who accept places at the School for their child to complete an ethnic monitoring form.



Under no circumstances does the School link our ethnic monitoring data with pupil records. It is hoped that all parents/carers will feel able to participate in the ethnic monitoring scheme.

## **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

See Admissions and EAL policies.

## **VARIATION IN SCHOOL UNIFORM**

Although Polwhele House has Christian roots, the School does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and it welcomes pupils of all faiths and none, and it offers the opportunity for pupils to practise their own faiths.

The Head will consider written requests from parents/carers for variations in the uniform on religious grounds that are consistent with the School's ethos and its policies on health and safety. The Head may take expert advice and will normally arrange to meet with the parents/carers to discuss the implications of such a request.

The Head will also meet with parents who have concerns around uniform for reasons of gender identity or sensory issues; these will be dealt with sensitively on an individual basis.

## **TEACHING & LEARNING**

We achieve educational inclusion by continually reviewing what we do, through asking ourselves these **key questions**:

- Do all our children achieve their best?
- Are there differences in the achievement of different groups of children?
- What are we doing for those children who we know are not achieving their best?
- Are our actions effective?
- Are we successful in promoting racial harmony and preparing pupils to live in a diverse society?

All children share a common entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets their social and learning needs. We recognise that it is the teacher's responsibility to meet the needs of all children in their class and ensure that all children:

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued;
- Appreciate and value the differences they see in others;
- Experience success;
- Use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles;
- Have challenging targets that enable them to succeed;
- Participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical need



As part of high quality teaching all teachers constantly assess every child's attainment and progress (See **Assessment Policy**).

The National Curriculum and Common Entrance is our starting point for planning a curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. We meet these needs through setting suitable learning challenges and responding to children's diverse learning needs.

If a child is making less than expected progress then the teacher will adapt their teaching to target the specific areas, this may include modifying teaching, use of apparatus or in class support. The majority of pupil's needs will be met through high quality teaching.

Senior leaders meet at least termly to analyse pupil progress using teacher assessment data. The termly progress meetings will address the key questions above. Data is used to monitor pupil progress against targets and ensure adequate planning and provision is in place, at individual, class, year group and whole school levels.

Where the attainment of a child significantly exceeds the expected level of attainment, teachers will provide extension materials for areas which the child shows particular aptitude.

When pupils are identified as having additional needs such as SEND, EAL or able and interested, procedures from the relevant policies will be followed.

The school is committed to providing an environment that allows differently able children full access to all areas of learning and school life. Our Accessibility Plan identifies the positive actions that the school takes to support this.

At Polwhele House School we believe that all pupils should be able to use and benefit from school facilities and the education provided and no pupil, parent, member of staff or visitor should suffer racist, sexist or gender-based harassment or the fear of racist, sexist or gender-based harassment.

Extra-curricular provision, including after school clubs, concerts, workshops, trips etc. are a valuable part of school provision that can develop and promote individual strengths. Whole school planning will include providing activities to celebrate diversity and meet the needs of different groups within the school. Individual planning may include making provision to meet individual needs, for example, ensuring that a promising athlete can access the necessary clubs.

## **APPOINTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF**

Job specifications carry a statement that this School is an Equal Opportunities employer and welcomes applications for all posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of sex, race, religion, disability or age.

Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only (i.e. skills, qualifications, abilities, experience) in selection for recruitment. People with disabilities will be offered facilities at interviews to enable them to demonstrate their suitability for employment.

All employees have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.



People becoming disabled while in employment will be given positive help to retain their jobs or to be considered for redeployment if that is necessary.

See also the School's Staff Recruitment and Performance Management and Induction policies.

## **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

Freedom of expression is a fundamental right protected under the Human Rights Act 1998 by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is also a fundamental right under common law. Polwhele House School promotes freedom of expression, as well as healthy and balanced debate of all issues, including those considered controversial or sensitive.

Freedom of expression does not extend to statements that discriminate against or harass, or incite violence or hatred against, other persons and groups, particularly by reference to their race, religious belief, gender or sexual orientation. In such cases, the School will take action against staff or pupils concerned. Such action could result in dismissal (in the case of staff) or permanent exclusion (in the case of pupils).

Promotion of extremist views or attempts to radicalise groups or individuals are not protected under freedom of expression. The School actively works to protect pupils and staff from exposure to such views and to promote fundamental British values. Anyone who promotes extremism or attempts to radicalise others within school will be immediately reported to the police.

The boundary between the expression of intolerant or offensive views and hate speech is not always an easy one to draw. However, a number of factors are likely to be relevant, including the intention of the person making the statement, the context in which they are making it, the intended audience, and the particular words used.

The School has a duty not to promote partisan political views. When political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, the School ensures that pupils are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

In promoting freedom of expression, the School has a duty to protect vulnerable individuals. In particular, younger pupils will be protected from discussion of certain issues and debates.

See also the School's Child Protection Policy.

## **BREACHES OF THE POLICY**

Any breach of policy will be dealt with in line with procedures set out in the Behaviour Policy (in the case of pupils) and the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures in the Staff Handbook (in the case of staff).

Examples of behaviour which is unacceptable and would be considered a breach of policy include (unless stated otherwise, each statement embraces acts of discrimination or



harassment on the grounds of either age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief or disability):

- Physical assault against a person or group;
- Verbal abuse, insults, threats or intimidation;
- Graffiti;
- Distribution of leaflets, magazines or insignia which incite hatred or encourage discrimination or harassment;
- Excluding or inciting others to exclude a person or a group;
- Selection for teams, clubs etc. in preferential ways;
- A refusal to co-operate with pupils or colleagues;
- Making discriminatory comments in the course of discussion or lessons;
- Repeatedly making comments of a sexual or sexist nature.

In addition, pupils should be made aware, and staff vigilant, to the fact that the content of posters displayed on walls or leaflets distributed in school (including by electronic means) could be offensive. No pupil should display posters or distribute leaflets without the express approval of a member of teaching staff.

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**Created:** April 2011

**Reviewed:** April 2011, September 2011 (DM), Mar 2013 (SMT), Feb 2014 (SMT), March 2017, October 2017, September 2019, November 2021

**Review date:** Annually