

2023

# Lakeside school Equalities Policy

## **AIMS**

Our primary aims are:

- To educate, develop and prepare our pupils for life in Britain
- To eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other behaviour inappropriate to the Equality Act.
- To promote equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.
- To foster good relations across all characteristics – between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The governing body of Lakeside School believe that all pupils and their families and staff should be treated fairly and equitably and without prejudice. They affirm their commitment that there will be no discrimination on grounds of Disability, Gender/Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Age or Sexual Orientation. Diversity is to be celebrated as bringing a wealth of different experiences to bear on the education of the pupils.

This policy is written to conform with the legislation contained in the Equality Act 2010.

In addition, there will be no discrimination against:

- learners due to the behaviour of their parents and/or siblings

When recruiting staff, health related questions will not be asked until after a job offer is made, and then, only if it is necessary for the role.

It is expected that every stakeholder in the organisation will make a positive contribution to this policy, namely:

- All staff whether paid or voluntary
- All visitors to Lakeside school
- All learners at Lakeside School

## **EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

- To achieve the highest possible standard of education for pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, religion and belief, socio-economic group, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, age, or disability.
- To ensure the curriculum promotes positive attitudes to ethnic and cultural diversity and celebrates diversity/equality and achievement.
- To ensure enrichment activities are made accessible to all pupils by considering accessibility and equality when arranging an activity and addressing barriers through planning and risk assessment
- To encourage understanding and respect for the beliefs, doctrines, and personal circumstances of individuals.
- To involve, as far as possible, representatives from diverse groups in our catchment area in school life.

- To monitor any issues that arise within the organisation and take appropriate action, fully supporting any person in the organisation who is faced with prejudice or discrimination
- To deal swiftly, effectively and firmly with comments and incidents that are detrimental to the well-being of others.
- To treat seriously any breaches of the policy, regarding them as misconduct which may lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- To seek to employ a range of staff representative of the diversity of our catchment area and with a variety of experience.
- To ensure the correct and appropriate procedures for the recruitment of staff.
- To supply specialist aids and facilities to enable disabled people
- To undertake an annual evaluation process to ensure that the policy is clear, in keeping with current legislation and being adhered to.

We recognise the importance of enabling our pupils and their families to have equal access, as far as possible, to the facilities and activities we have to offer. High standards are possible for all and we seek to ensure that our expectations are challenging whatever the level of intellectual or physical ability, gender, gender reassignment, age, ethnicity, belief or religion, pregnancy and maternity. We try to extend this welcome to everyone including staff, parents/guardians, children and the community.

It is important that we encourage the active involvement of our learners and help them to understand their rights as well as respecting the rights of others. We actively engage with our community to ensure that prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping are challenged, providing a harmonious working environment in which everyone feels valued.

## **LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE**

### **The Governing Body will:**

- Monitor and review this policy and its effectiveness on an annual basis
- Assess the impact of the policy on the standards achieved within the school.
- Make reasonable adjustments if the premises or employment arrangements limit access to particular community groups or individuals,
- Receive feedback as part of the Headteacher's report and question school practice.
- Give due regard to its own members and recruitment of new governors.
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### **The Headteacher is responsible for:**

- ensuring that this policy is implemented on a day to day basis, and kept up to date.
- ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given training and support
- taking appropriate action in any cases of discrimination.
- Continue to monitor and formulate accessibility plans in conjunction with the governing body.
- Record and deal with incidents of prejudice-based bullying, and other inappropriate behaviour

**All Staff are responsible for:**

- Setting an example to pupils in terms of their treatment of one another and display tolerance and understanding towards the beliefs and cultures of others.
- Ensuring that policies and procedures are implemented according to the school equality policy
- Be vigilant for incidents of prejudice and act upon them
- Encourage pupils to try new activities, challenging stereotypical roles and prejudice.

**DISABILITY****PUPILS**

Lakeside is a school for pupils with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. Pupils may have physical disabilities, sensory impairments and/or autism. Pupils may only enter the school if they have a statement of special educational needs.

Although all pupils have a learning and or a physical disability it is recognised that there is still the scope for unfair treatment on the grounds of disability within the school. The school has a positive policy for inclusion which ensures that all pupils are treated with equality. No child will be denied access to education or activity on the grounds of their disability.

**STAFF**

Disability is not a bar, per se to employment at Lakeside. However, depending on the nature of the job, certain abilities are required. For all staff working directly with children, the key concern is the safety and welfare of the children. As long as the disability does not compromise this, it will not be a factor in employment. Staff need to be capable of carrying out their job description after reasonable adjustments have been made for their disability.

**OTHERS**

Parents, governors and visitors with disabilities are well catered for as the site is designed for pupils using wheelchairs and other mobility aids, and those with visual and hearing impairments. Please see our accessibility plan.

**LEGISLATION**

The Act provides protection for individuals against discrimination on grounds of disability, in employment and when goods, facilities and services are being provided. This extends to the delivery of education and other services by schools.

**DEFINITION**

The DDA defines a person as having a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be:

- substantial (more than minor or trivial)

- adverse
- long-term (it has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least a year or for the rest of the life of
- the person affected)

The DDA also provides protection for people who have cancer, MS, HIV/AIDS as well as those who have had heart surgery; are on kidney dialysis; people with diabetes; stammer; dyslexia; people with severe disfigurements; mental health issues and learning difficulties or disabilities – provided their condition results in a disability which meets the DDA definition. Also covered are those who have previously had a disability (e.g. a mental health problem).

## **SCOPE**

The legislation applies to:

Pupils and parents, prospective pupils and parents, staff and others using school facilities.

It is unlawful to treat disabled pupils less favourably, without justification, than their non-disabled peers. Schools must comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to nondisabled pupils, even if it means treating them more favourably. The duty covers:

- ✓ admissions
- ✓ exclusions
- ✓ education
- ✓ benefits, facilities and services
- ✓ extended schools services

## **ACCESS**

The school has an accessibility policy with an action plan for improvements.

## **GENDER**

### **PUPILS**

There is no discrimination within the curriculum with regards to gender. Pupils are actively taught in a gender neutral way and any desires expressed to take part in any activity with the school will be honoured.

### **STAFF**

The school follows safer recruitment policies and human resources advice with regard to avoiding discrimination of any sort. When shortlisting, names are redacted from applications. All staff have opportunities for development in line with their career path and our staff training policy.

### **OTHERS**

The same policy which applies to staff applies to the recruitment of governors. Recruitment is undertaken on the basis of availability of candidates and their relevant experience and motivation.

### **LEGISLATION**

The Act provides protection for individuals against discrimination on the grounds of gender, in employment and when goods, facilities and services are being provided. This extends to the delivery of education and other services by schools.

### **SCOPE**

The legislation applies to:

Pupils and parents, prospective pupils and parents, staff and others using school facilities.

Schools must treat pupils equally, and not subject them to any detriment, irrespective of their gender.

The duty covers:

- admissions
- exclusions
- education
- benefits, facilities and services
- extended schools services

### **CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES**

The school curriculum and the resources chosen to support it will be carefully selected to avoid perpetuating stereotypes about the roles of males and females.

### **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

The school uniform consists of a polo shirt and sweatshirt or sweat cardigan. All pupils may wear skirts, tunic dresses or trousers as they wish.

## RACE

### PUPILS

Pupils gain admission to Lakeside only if they have a statement of special educational needs classifying them as having severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. The LA is the placing authority of the school and pupils are placed at Lakeside from a provision panel which is concerned to place children in their nearest appropriate school. Please see our admissions policy.

The commit to the following continuous actions within our school community:

- Vigilance by staff to ensure that all ethnicities are neither victims of racism
- Train all members of the school community to avoid negative and stereotypical assumptions about those from ethnicities other than their own and to understand the dangers of unconscious bias.
- Understanding the importance of recognising the significance of and responding to cultural, linguistic and "racial" variations in striving to achieve equality of opportunity for all.

### STAFF

Vacancies are open to people of all races, colour and creed. The one pre requisite we ask of all staff is that they are able to communicate clearly and effectively in English as communication is a key issue in the education of our children.

### OTHERS

Particular care is be taken to ensure that all parents are able to take part fully in school life and that any cultural issues that may affect this involvement are treated with openness and respect.

### LEGISLATION

The regulations make it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of race in employment, and when goods, facilities and services are being provided. These provisions extend to include the delivery of education and other services by schools. (Race relations act)

### DEFINITIONS

The term 'Race' includes:

Colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin and citizenship as well as race.

Sikhs, Jews and Gypsy Roma people are covered, as they are groups of separate ethnic origins.

Muslims are not, in law, deemed to be a group with a separate ethnic origin and are not, therefore, covered by the RRA but are protected by the religion and belief provisions.

*Note:* Although Traveller families who are not Gypsy Roma or Irish are not officially covered by the RRA, schools are advised not to treat these pupils differentially as this may conflict with their rights under the Human Rights Act 1999.

## SCOPE

The legislation applies to:

Pupils and parents, prospective pupils and parents, staff and others using school facilities.

Schools must treat pupils equally and not subject them to any detriment, irrespective of their race. The duty covers:

1. admissions
2. exclusions
3. education
4. benefits, facilities and services
5. extended schools services

## CURRICIUM AND RESOURCES

The school curriculum and the resources chosen to support it will be carefully selected to promote inclusion, celebrate cultural diversity and avoid perpetuating racial stereotypes. Where pupils are able to access learning that is explicitly about racism, this will be taught using approved materials.

## SCHOOL UNIFORM

The school uniform consists of a polo shirt and sweatshirt or sweat cardigan. Pupils may wear skirts, pinafore dresses or trousers as they wish. Headscarves can be worn.

## DRESS CODE FOR STAFF

Staff may wear any clothing as appropriate to their race or religion but the education of the children is paramount and this school has a strong emphasis on developing communication for pupils. It is essential that staff, whilst working with children, have their faces uncovered and their lips and facial expressions clearly visible as this aids understanding of language and may be the prime source of information for deaf children.

## RACIST INCIDENTS

The school adopts the definition of a Racist Incident recommended by the Macpherson report following the inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence as:

"any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".

The school has a record book for racist incidents and staff are aware that any racially motivated attack – physical or verbal should be recorded.



## **RELIGION & BELIEFS**

### **PUPILS**

The religious beliefs of all pupils are known to the teaching staff and management team and all allowances are made for appropriate religious observances.

### **STAFF**

The religious beliefs of all staff members will be respected in a culture of open-mindedness and honesty.

### **OTHERS**

The religious beliefs of all stakeholders will be respected in a culture of open-mindedness and honesty.

### **LEGISLATION**

The Act provides protection for individuals against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief (including perceived religion, or lack of religion or belief) in employment, and when goods, facilities and services are being provided. This extends to the delivery of education and other services by schools.

### **DEFINITION**

- The definition of religion and belief covers fringe or cult religions and a range of other philosophical beliefs (e.g. humanism).
- It does not include political beliefs.
- It is unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds that they do not have any religion or belief at all (e.g. an atheist), or that they do not adhere or sufficiently adhere to a particular religion or belief.

### **SCOPE**

The legislation applies to:

Pupils and parents, prospective pupils and parents, staff and others using school facilities.

Schools must treat pupils equally, and not subject them to any detriment, irrespective of their religion or belief – or lack of it. The duty covers:

1. admissions
2. exclusions
3. education
4. extended schools services

## **CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES**

The Act enables schools to continue to deliver the broad content based and inclusive curriculum to which all pupils are entitled without fear of challenges based on the religious views of particular parents or children. The exemption covers the National Curriculum, together with subjects such as RE, which is not

part of the National Curriculum but is required by law to be taught in maintained schools, and also includes elements such as library books.

The situations in which schools may act without infringing the provisions of the Act (on grounds of religion or belief) or laying themselves open to lawful challenges from parents or children include:

- the teaching of evolution theories in science classes
- use of technology to teach all pupils
- selecting literature or texts for study which are challenging and interesting, and which promote discussion among pupils

The school RE syllabus includes teaching modules on the 5 main world faiths where relevant. The PSHE / Citizenship curriculum promotes an acceptance of all people celebrating diversity.

Resources for RE may include artefacts from the main world faiths. These artefacts will be treated with respect and consideration and will be handled as far as possible in accordance with the precepts of that faith.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Schools are required to provide a daily act of collective worship of a broadly Christian character. The collective worship exemption in the Act ensures that all schools can continue in this requirement without lawful challenge. It also extends to activities organised by, or on behalf of, the school including, for example, harvest festival, Christmas carol services, Diwali or other faith-based events.

Parents not wishing their children to participate in collective worship or other related activities have the right to withdraw them. However parents of other religions or beliefs cannot claim their children are discriminated against (on grounds of religion or belief) simply because the school does not provide alternative facilities or services for separate worship.

The school uses its assemblies to explore and celebrate a range of festivals from around the world.

## **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

The school uniform consists of a polo shirt and sweatshirt or sweat cardigan. Pupils may wear skirts, pinafore dresses or trousers as they wish. It does not preclude the wearing of any item which may be required by a religion.

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

### PUPILS

Because of the nature of the learning disabilities of the pupils their sexual development is often delayed. It would be more difficult for a pupil with SLD to recognise and articulate their sexual orientation.

### STAFF

The sexual orientation of staff is not an issue that is taken into consideration as part of the recruitment procedure.

### OTHERS

Sexual orientation is not a relevant factor in the recruitment of governors and has no significance in the way the school responds to parents or other visitors to the school.

### LEGISLATION

The regulations make it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of apparent or perceived sexual orientation in employment, and when goods, facilities and services are being provided. These provisions extend to the delivery of education and other services by schools. The legislation does not require schools to *promote* gay rights or homosexuality to children

### DEFINITION

People who have changed their sex (trans-gender people) are not covered by these regulations. They are protected by the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended in 2003.

### SCOPE

The legislation applies to:

Pupils and parents, prospective pupils and parents, staff and others using school facilities.

Schools must treat pupils equally, and not subject them to any detriment, irrespective of their apparent or perceived sexual orientation of that of their parents. The duty covers:

1. admissions
2. exclusions
3. education
4. benefits, facilities and services
5. extended schools services

## CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES

Sex education is delivered at a level and pace to suit the needs of individual pupils. Some pupils are still unclear of their gender by the time they leave school, others may be able to engage in sexual activity and they will receive a full sex education programme. The sex education programme covers homosexuality as well as heterosexuality. There will be no value judgements made about the nature if different

relationships. The sex education programme places the emphasis on the need for sexual activity to be part of a loving relationship of any nature.

Teachers will deal honestly and sensitively with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support if required.

The school curriculum and the resources chosen to support it will be carefully selected to avoid perpetuating stereotypes about homosexual and heterosexual people.

## **GENDER REASSIGNMENT**

### **PUPILS**

Because of the nature of the learning disabilities of the pupils their sexual development is often delayed. It would be more difficult for a pupil with SLD to recognise need for gender reassignment.

### **STAFF**

The gender of staff is not an issue that is taken into consideration as part of the recruitment procedure. This will apply equally to staff undergoing or having undergone gender reassignment

### **OTHERS**

Gender reassignment is not a relevant factor in the recruitment of governors and has no significance in the way the school responds to parents or other visitors to the school.

### **LEGISLATION**

The regulations make it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of gender reassignment in employment, and when goods, facilities and services are being provided. These provisions extend to the delivery of education and other services by schools.

### **DEFINITION**

The definition of gender reassignment has been amended to cover people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change their sex. A transsexual person has the protected characteristics of gender reassignment. Protection remains for people undergoing gender reassignment from discrimination due to absence from work and studies

### **SCOPE**

The legislation applies to:

Pupils and parents, prospective pupils and parents, staff and others using school facilities.

Schools must treat pupils equally, and not subject them to any detriment, related to themselves or their parents in this respect. The duty covers:

1. admissions
2. exclusions

3. education
4. benefits, facilities and services
5. extended schools services

## **CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES**

Sex education is delivered at a level and pace to suit the needs of individual pupils.

Teachers will deal honestly and sensitively with issues of gender orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support if required.

The school curriculum and the resources chosen to support it will be carefully selected to avoid perpetuating stereotypes.

## **AGE**

### **Staff and Volunteers**

Lakeside does not discriminate against people on the basis of their age. Staff regularly stay at work beyond statutory retirement age, and in recent years staff have remained until their 70<sup>th</sup> year as productive members of the school team.

We adopt the county policy not to impose a retirement age, and will renew contracts annually beyond retirement age for anyone who wishes and who is mentally and physically fit enough to work to the benefit of the children

It is important that we try and recruit staff of all ages. However age will never be the prime consideration in recruitment. We value the experience and knowledge brought to the post by older applicants and the enthusiasm and vitality that can be brought by younger applicants

We also welcome volunteers into the school who are beyond retirement age as they can bring a wealth of experience to the education of the children.

Equality objectives April 23 to April 24

### **To increase the level of pupil voice by:**

- Making sure that pupils are able to represent themselves in ways pertinent to them in the EHCP review process from year 9 onwards
- Making sure that all cohorts of pupils are represented and catered for on the school council
- Pursuing a child centred curriculum with choice, decisions and agency at the heart of its teaching

### **To continue to narrow the potential progress gap between vulnerable groups of pupils and other pupils by:**

Providing extra staff support for identified vulnerable pupils:

- Those receiving pupil premium,

- Those with behaviours which mean their families struggle to access the community,
- Those with severe physical and health needs which mean they need regular remote access to school and
- Children looked after.

**To ensure that the mental health and wellbeing of all our pupils is promoted and supported across all cohorts by:**

- Providing relevant and regular access to enrichment for all pupils
- Training staff to recognise warning signs and be equipped to provide support and seek professional advice
- Teaching pupils that they can ask us for help and learn to manage their feelings and behaviours
- Providing parent/family support in the form of trained staff who are proactive in their communication with identified vulnerable families.