



TOLWORTH GIRLS' SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM
SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY

Governing Body Committee: Human Resources Committee (HRC)/Full Governing Body (FGB)

Date approved: HRC (May 22), FGB (July 22)

Next review: March 24

Introduction

We welcome our duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#) to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender) and of maternity and pregnancy, religion and belief, and sexual orientation.

The Academy complies with the specific duties of the Equality Act to publish equality information annually and to set and publish equality objectives at least every four years. This information will be published on the Academy website and incorporated into the School Development Plan (SDP).

This Equality Scheme brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality.

This scheme is a whole school policy, which is closely linked with a number of other whole school policies, including but not limited to:

- Admissions
- Teaching and Learning
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Behaviour - the Tolworth Way
- Exclusion
- Accessibility
- Staff appraisal

Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

The [Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools/Academies to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and Articles of Association.

Guiding Principles

Tolworth Girls' school & Sixth Form is a welcoming Academy where everyone is valued and where tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered.

- We believe that every student should have the opportunity to achieve their academic potential and realise their dream;
- We value every student as an individual with their own spiritual, cultural and individual strengths that enrich our school community;
- We celebrate the achievements of all, encouraging our students to flourish and to value each other;
- We aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

In fulfilling our legal obligations, we are guided by the following:

We see all learners, potential learners, their parents/carers and members of staff as of equal value.

Irrespective of:

- Age
- Disability
- Race or Nationality
- Gender and gender identity;
- Religious, non-religious, affiliation or belief
- Whatever their sex or sexual orientation
- Whether they are in a marriage or civil partnership
- Whether they are pregnant or on maternity/paternity leave

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this policy (see appx 1) are published and communicated throughout the Academy, including to staff, students and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years;
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the Equality objectives on a daily basis to the Headteacher;
- Appoint an Equality governor who will:

- I. Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document;
- II. Attend appropriate equality and diversity training.

The HR Committee will:

- Report back to the full governing board regarding any issues;
- Review the policy every two years to ensure it remains commensurate with the law and best practice.

The Headteacher will:

- I. Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and students;
- II. Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors.

The Senior Leadership Team has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of this policy.

All staff are expected to:

- Welcome and value all members of our school community irrespective of individual protective characteristics.
- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in our school community;
- Deal with any prejudice related incidents that may occur;
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons/interventions/sessions that reflect our guiding principles;
- Differentiate where appropriate for identified groups within lessons in line with this policy.

All students are expected to:

- Welcome and value all members of our school community irrespective of
- Respect and value linguistic, cultural and religious diversity in our school community.
- Develop personal and cultural identity and to be confident, open to change, receptive and respectful towards other identities;
- Acknowledge the existence of prejudice, and be proactive in tackling and eliminating discrimination.

All parents/carers are expected to work with the Academy to:

- Value and treat respectfully all members of our school community irrespective of race, colour, ethnic or national origin or citizenship.

Equality Aims

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. The Academy's main aims are:

- To provide a secure, nurturing and inspirational learning environment;
- To develop confident and happy young people who make a positive contribution to our society;

To encourage respect for others, resilience and a love of learning in all students to engender in our students the skills needed so that they can shape their own future.

In delivering our aims, we must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to:

- **Disability:** if employees with disabilities, or become disabled, they are encouraged to tell the Academy's management about their disability so that appropriate support can be offered and reasonable adjustments made (see Appendix 2). The Academy will monitor the premises to consider whether they place employees with disabilities or applicants at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonable, the Academy will take steps to improve access;
- **Age:** The Academy will review policies to ensure that they comply with age discrimination legislation;
- **Gender and Gender Identity:** The Academy will review policies and working practices to ensure that they comply with relevant legislation;
- **Sex or Sexual Orientation:** The Academy will ensure that policies and working practices comply fully with legislation on sexual orientation;
- **Religion, faith or belief:** The Academy respects the needs and requirements of people who adhere to a range of cultural and religious beliefs. Where possible reasonable adjustments to working practices or premises may be made where an employee has a particular religious' requirement;
- **Race or Nationality:** The Academy will ensure participation of all heritage groups in all its activities including recruitment, training and development. Monitoring will be undertaken to identify any areas of inequality.

1. Attitudes and relationships

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- Positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, good relations between people with and without disabilities, and an absence of harassment of people with disabilities;
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- Mutual respect and good relations between adults, adolescents and an absence of harassment.

2. Staff recruitment, retention and development

We are committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with students and parents and carers of the Academy.

- We recognise the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce and will work at all times within the requirements of anti-discrimination legislation and will promote equality positively in all decisions related to staffing;

Promotion and advancement will be on merit and all decisions related to the same will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy;

- Those involved in making appointments will ensure that in recruitment procedures any advertisements, job descriptions, short listing and interview procedures are without any direct or indirect discrimination, unless there is a specifically exempt area, for instance relating to sex and decency;
- The recruitment and selection process is crucially important and governors will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that those making selection and recruitment decisions do not discriminate in making these decisions;
- All applicants applying for posts at the Academy will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

3. Retirement

- The governing board recognises that there cannot be any default retirement age and therefore employees will only be judged on their performance

4. Reducing and remove inequalities

Positive Action:

The Governing Body recognises that the avoidance of discrimination is not sufficient to ensure that equality exists in the Academy. The Governing Body will therefore give full consideration to measures of positive action which may assist in achieving the aims of this policy. This action is designed to encourage or facilitate the employment or training of minority or disadvantaged groups.

The Governing Body will not discriminate in favour of individuals from specific groups (positive discrimination) but it will take positive action which enable members of those groups to compete on an equal basis. Positive action measures may include:

- Welcoming applicants from specific groups which are underrepresented in the Academy;
- Welcoming applications from people with disabilities;
- Advertisements which welcome applicants from individuals of a particular sexual orientation, religion or belief, but make it clear that selection will be on merit;
- Consideration of Flexible working - welcoming the use of job shares and flexible working where operational factors make it possible;
- Supportive measures for underrepresented groups;
- Assistance with applications for candidates with language problems;
- Commitments to interviewing people with disabilities or medical needs, who meet the basic criteria for the post;
- Welcome staff becoming representatives of trade unions / associations.

5. Consultation:

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- People with and without disabilities;
- People from a range of backgrounds;
- Both women and men;
- People of differing sexual identity;
- Parents, carers, community and governor links.

We will actively seek comment from stakeholders in the following ways

- Staff focus group;
- Contact with parents and carers, who have expressed an interest in the Single Equality Policy;
- Student council discussions;
- HR agenda items.

6. Compliance with statutory requirements or guidance

We maintain information, which shows our compliance with the public sector equality duty. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires schools/academies to:

- I. Publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED - schools/academies must update this published information at least every year
- II. Prepare and publish equality objectives - schools/academies must update these objectives at least once every 4 years

The PSED was introduced by the Equality Act 2010 and applies to all schools, including maintained schools, academies, independent schools, maintained nursery schools, and maintained and non-maintained special schools and on the basis of which we decide on specific and measurable objectives.

Our equality objectives are integrated into the SDP.

We keep our equality objectives under review and, as required by the Equality Act, report annually on progress towards achieving them.

7. Within the curriculum

- We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out above;
- All students are encouraged to value their own cultural heritage and the culture and lifestyles of others, and to show respect for self and others while at the same time finding common ground to talk to one another and valuing living together in a community;
- Every member of staff understands their responsibility for establishing a positive climate for debate and extending opportunities for discussion. They address widely held misconceptions to avoid the risk of students with limited experience arriving at consensus views of doubtful validity.

8. Conduct and behaviour

We expect high standards of behaviour from all members of our school community. Behaviour which does not reflect equal opportunities is unacceptable at all times and will be dealt with accordingly.

(Please refer to student Behaviour policy and Staff Code of Conduct for more details)

9. Ethos and organisation

We ensure that the principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- students' progress, attainment and achievement;
- students' personal development, welfare and wellbeing;
- teaching styles and strategies;
- admissions and attendance;
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development;
- care, guidance and support;
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians;
- working with the wider community.

10. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The Academy is opposed to all forms of prejudice, which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to above.

These include:

- Prejudices around disability, special educational needs and students with medical needs;
- Prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- Prejudices reflecting sexism, homophobia and transphobia, or perceived sexual orientation

We keep a record of prejudice related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice related incidents at our Academy and how they are dealt with.

Prejudice related incidents are identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with in compliance with our Anti-Bullying policy.

11. Information and resources

We ensure that the contents of this policy are known to all staff and governors and as appropriate to all students and their parents and carers.

12. Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students and parents and aim to comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

13. Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development both as individuals and as groups or teams. This is facilitated through the appraisal process.

14. Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, in line with our grievance, capability or disciplinary procedure as appropriate. The Governing Body is committed to investigate any such complaint. These procedures will be followed carefully and promptly in response to any such complaint. The first point of contact for any such complaint should be Siobhan Lowe, Headteacher, or in the case of a grievance against the Headteacher, Chair of Governors. In addition, staff have the right to approach their profession association or trade union representative for support.

15. Monitoring and review

We collect, analyse and use data in relation to employment, performance and achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status and gender. This data will be captured and presented to the Human Resources committee (HRC) on a yearly basis.

In conjunction with good teaching and learning practice and school based interventions, the impact of this policy will be evidenced in positive student attainment and achievement.

- We will publish our equality scheme and objectives;
- We will review and revise the scheme every two years;
- We will consult with relevant stakeholders in setting objectives;
- The Equality objectives will be reviewed every 4 years but reported on annually.
- We will work with our student voice to look at our continuing work on diversity and inclusion - this may be presented twice yearly to the full governing body from senior students.

16. Other Actions to ensure Race Equality

The Academy will continue to track opportunities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion through the academic and non-academic curriculum. This will be part of the Quality of Education Committee remit.

Tolworth Girls' School & Sixth Form Equality Objectives 2022-2024

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims and they are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who have a shared characteristic and those who do not

Tolworth Girls' School & Sixth Form Trust will annually review how well we achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (2010) (race, disability, gender and Preferred Gender Identity, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marital status, religion and belief and sexual orientation).

We aim to provide the highest possible education for all of our students. The ethos of our Academy clearly reflects our commitment to fully including and respecting all members of our school community.

We have set ourselves the following objectives for 2022 onwards:

1. To ensure that all students gain the knowledge they need to prepare them for adult life, through a curriculum that meets the needs of all.
2. To narrow the achievement gap for students and young people, including students in care, Pupil Premium (PPG) by ensuring increased opportunities and improved outcomes.
3. To help students to fulfil their full potential, by supporting families and focusing support on improving the lives of all students particularly our most vulnerable students.
4. To help secure appropriate mental health support for all members of our school community.
5. To improve consultation (Focus Groups and MS Teams surveys) and involvement of all students by ensuring all groups in school have a voice.



Tolworth Girls' School & Sixth Form

Reasonable Adjustments for Staff

The Academy is committed to promoting equality and diversity, providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all who work and study here. We do not discriminate against staff on the basis of age, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion, faith or belief (Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics). The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff and governors treat visitors, volunteers, contractors and former staff members.

We are aware that in order to support staff to perform and complete their job role there may be a need to make reasonable adjustments either on a permanent or temporary basis. These adjustments will be made in collaboration with staff and will be documented accordingly.

Examples of steps it might be reasonable for an employer to have to take include:

- Making adjustments to premises;
- Allocating some duties to elsewhere;
- Transfer to fill an existing vacancy;
- Altering hours of working or training;
- Assign a different place of work or training;
- Allowing absence during working or training hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment;
- Acquiring or modifying equipment;
- Modifying instructions or reference manuals;
- Modifying procedures for testing or assessment;
- Providing a reader or interpreter;
- Providing supervision or other support;
- Allowing a period of disability leave;
- Participating in supported employment schemes, such as Work step;
- Employing a support worker to assist a disabled worker;
- Modifying disciplinary or grievance procedures;
- Adjusting redundancy selection criteria.