



HAILSHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMY TRUST

'Be the very best you can be'

EQUALITY POLICY

SLT responsible:	Deputy Headteacher – Quality of Education
Last reviewed:	June 2024
Ratified by Trustees:	11 July 2024

Why we have developed this Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for Hailsham Community College all through school is a single policy for all protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010. We are committed to developing cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's outcomes, both educational and wellbeing, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – learners, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies.

The characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Sex
- Race
- Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Age

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we will listen to and involve learners, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

Our Vision Statement about Equality

At Hailsham Community College all through academy, central to our college's ethos are our personal values. We define these as our 'Hailsham Way'.

- **Be Safe** - Follow instructions, no mobile phones, keep hands feet and comments to yourself.
- **Be Respectful** - Listen, be kind, help others, be friendly, be tolerant, work with others. Be nice.
- **Be Ready** - Arrive on time with the correct equipment & uniform, listen in silence, sit in allocated seat.
- **Be Working** - Work hard, be motivated, enthusiastic, curious and resilient.

We are committed to celebrating diversity of our learners, staff, visitors, parents and partner agencies. We seek to prevent discrimination and promote equality for all in a safe and welcoming environment.

Our goal is to educate young people to become global citizens. We believe education is central to both understanding society and developing a personal identity. Our learning environment is built on respect. We want our learners to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, based on an informed world view.

We are conscious that similarities and differences exist within our community and we are determined that these shall not be a barrier to any aspect of school life. We recognise that, in the spirit of equity, not all individuals can be treated the same to achieve universal equality.

We know that true equality and a community where tolerance is upheld comes from fostering good relations between all. This involves us using education to develop mutual understanding and create a purposeful and harmonious community where all of our learners succeed together.

Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, race and ethnicity, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and social deprivation.

As a college, we are committed to knowing our diverse community and obtain evidence analysis of information, which provides evidence of the backgrounds of the members of our school community and the attainment and wellbeing of our learners and groups of learners.

Overall aims of our Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life, the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes.

The themes are reflected in our Accessibility & Equality Objectives.

Our approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcomes for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process of developing this policy in order to ensure better outcomes for all. We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately, negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between and within different groups of learners and the wider school community.

We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as recognising and accepting our duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (The Prevent Duty 2015) and promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

- preparation for entry to the school and transition
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approaches and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of learners for post-16 study
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of learners
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare

- the involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- school policies

The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Our Trustees will:

- support the Heads of School in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents/carers and partner agencies about the policy
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every four years

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, learners and visitors/contractors are informed about the Equality Policy and give consideration to feedback received
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the policy and report to the Trustees on the effectiveness of the policy
- ensure that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- with the Heads of School, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy.

Our school staff will:

- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

Our learners will:

- be encouraged to actively support the Policy

Our parents/carers will:

- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the policy
- be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

How we developed our Policy – Using information

We know our college well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways and other people help us to do this. These include collection information from learners, staff, trustees, parents/carers and other groups. All these groups contribute to us developing equality and diversity in the school.

OfSTED inspectors report on how we are actively promoting equality and diversity, tackling bullying and discrimination and narrowing any gaps in achievement between different groups of children and learners, as well as how we are promoting British Values and prevention radicalisation and extremism, preparing learners to respect others and contribute to wider society and life in Britain.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through student voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously. We make use of:

- Parental surveys
- Parent forums
- In-house learner voice activities such as student council discussions and activities
- Trustee scrutiny

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our college. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

Within our college we have a facility for learners with a diagnosis of Autism. The ASD facility is funded by the local authority. All learners accessing the support of the facility have an Educational Health Care Plan, and the local authority has agreed a specialist provision is required to support the child's needs. These learners are integrated into mainstream classes and the college community, with varying levels of support. Learners accessing the facility enjoy an inclusive education.

Commissioned services

Increasingly we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services. We work closely with the local authority on procurement – buying in services - to ensure that equality issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equality issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and Initial Teacher Training) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made¹ or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, negative views of disabled people or people who practise a religion or follow a faith. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

¹ Unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work - for example ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capability to carry out the duties.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our learners to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

We expect learners and staff alike to take an active stand against all forms of discrimination and always to report it:

- To any teacher
- To their mentor
- To a member of the senior leadership team
- To a line manager
- To a school council member/peer mentor

Furthermore, staff are required to have due regard for the implications for people with protected characteristics when making decisions and shaping policy in order to advance equality of opportunity.

Implementation, monitoring and reviewing

This policy will be actively promoted and disseminated through our website, parent forums and school council.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our trustees who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

Equality Objectives

Using the views of a variety of stakeholders we have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be reviewed and published every 4 years.

APPENDIX 1

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES & ACCESSIBILITY ACTION PLAN 2023 – 2026

Reviewed by the Senior Team

Link to Public Sector Equality Duty	Protected Characteristics	Objective	Target Group	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
To promote equality of access and opportunity within our college and within our wider community.	Physical disability including sensory needs	To improve the accessibility of the building to meet emerging needs of new members of the community	Physical disability including sensory needs	<p>Work closely with outside agencies eg. Sensory Needs Service and Occupational therapy to meet needs of learners.</p> <p>To work closely with Access to Work to meet needs of employees and users of the building</p> <p>Improve signage including braille and CIP to identify classrooms/teachers/department areas.</p> <p>Continue to update yellow strips on edge of steps across site for visually impaired learners.</p> <p>Ensure PE curriculum includes disability sport activities. Including learner voice to support.</p>	S Wilkinson C Maxwell M Dyer	July 2026
To reduce discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Sexual orientation and gender	To prevent and respond to all incidents of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender	All	<p>Work with external agencies such as Stonewall to produce guidance for staff in dealing with homophobia and transphobia.</p> <p>To work to gain Rainbow Flag recognition for LGBTQ+ inclusion work. To work to increase number of learner led advocates for LGBTQ+ issues.</p>	LGBTQ+ lead M Fry C Maxwell	ongoing
To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Race and culture	To prevent and respond to all incidents of discrimination based on race and/or culture	All	Work with external agencies and develop guidance and support for staff dealing with racist incidents	HOY's AHOY's Safeguarding team GRT lead	Ongoing
To promote equality of access and opportunity within our college and within our wider community	All protected characteristics	Improve accessibility of information for parents/carers	All	<p>Conduct a brief survey with parents regarding the accessibility of college/parent communications.</p> <p>Establish guidelines for staff on the size, colour and choice of font for reading materials including policies and letters home.</p>	GRT lead SENCo C Maxwell ASD lead PP lead LAC lead	July 2024

				Ongoing work with GRT lead, ASD lead, PP lead, LAC lead, SMHP lead, safeguarding team and SENCo for EAL lead to ensure accessibility and sharing of information and opportunities/progress for all groups (including school trips)	SMHP lead Safeguarding team	
To promote equality of access and opportunity within our college and within our wider community	Disabled	Ensure that all disabled learners can be safely evacuated	Restricted mobility, visually impaired and wheelchair users	Review the emergency evacuation and lockdown plans for learners with restricted mobility, visually impaired, SEND needs. Consider and make explicit provision for visually impaired and wheelchair users in lockdown procedures.	SENCo S Wilkinson C Maxwell	July 2024
All three duties	All protected characteristics	Improve information and training available to staff	All	Arrange equalities training for all staff including an exploration of what reasonable adjustments both in and out of classroom looks like. Equality Impact Assessments to be added to the standard trips procedure checklist Improve understanding of ASD for all staff and increase positive attitudes towards ASD learners including working with CLASS, promotion of World Autism Day, use of visual aids in lessons and assembly and mentor programmes.	C Maxwell SENCo S Wilkinson ASD lead	July 2024

