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# Equality Policy

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Chew Valley School

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May 2021

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School Policy Approved by Local Governing Body

Signed: 

Name: Phil Heath

Date 31.05.21

Chair of Local Governing Body  
Authorised for Issue

Signed: 

Name: Gareth Beynon

Date 31.05.21

Headteacher

# Chew Valley School Equality Policy

## I Introduction

Chew Valley School is a community where every student matters and there is an emphasis on the wellbeing of every student and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

The Policy has been constructed with the values of the school at the heart of its work. These are that the school values expect high standards and teamwork from all stakeholders along with relationships, the community and the environment. The school is about the development of the whole child with an emphasis on student and staff wellbeing.

Our approach to equality is based on the following seven key principles:

(i) All learners and members of staff are of equal value. We will not discriminate on any of the grounds listed below (known as the protected characteristics) save where such discrimination is permitted by law. The protected characteristics that apply to schools are:

- Age (in relation to staff only);
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership (in relation to staff only);
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Sex; and
- Sexual orientation.

(ii) We recognise, respect and value difference. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

(iii) We nurture positive attitudes. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities which are different from each other.

(iv) We nurture a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

(v) We expect our staff to eliminate discrimination and promote an inclusive environment within the school.

(vi) We have the highest expectations of all our students. We expect that all students can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.

(vii) We work to raise standards for all students, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of students raises standards across the whole school.

## 2 Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to summarise how the school complies with the Equality Act 2010 and how the school is dedicated to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

### **3 Links to other policies and documentation**

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equality, we will take into account our duties under the Equality Act 2010 in applying other policies.

In line with the specific duties under the Equality Act 2010, we will publish our equality objectives and will publish information about how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Published Information will be updated annually and objectives will be updated every four years. This information is available on our website.

### **4 What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

We will not accept direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation of a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions; the way we provide education for our students; the way we provide access for students to any benefit, facility or service; or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. We take steps to advance equality of opportunity between pupils who share a protected characteristic and pupils who do not share it, and also seek to foster good relations across all characteristics. We encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

We make it clear that discrimination is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We challenge behaviours that fall foul of this, including through our effective behaviour and anti-bullying policies.

We have equality working groups for both staff and pupils, which help to identify and tackle any potential issues. We also seek to give opportunities for pupil voice to encourage pupils to discuss and contribute to improving aspects of school life. We also have a strong and accessible pastoral system, with procedures for pupils to raise any concerns.

As explained further below, we adhere to the Reasonable Adjustment duty for students with a disability – we take positive steps to ensure that disabled pupils can fully participate in the education provided by the school, and that they can enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services that the school provides for pupils.

We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the school. We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

### **5 Addressing discrimination**

Chew Valley School challenges all forms of discrimination which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality, including (but not limited to):

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs;
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation and identification, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes and using the incorrect preferred pronoun (or similar).

The Chew Valley School Behaviour Policy sets out how the school will promote good behaviour, self-discipline and respect, prevent bullying, and sets out the disciplinary sanctions if a pupil misbehaves. In applying the policy, the school will take into account its duties under the Equality Act.

The school treats bullying in any form, particularly where it relates to any protected characteristic, very seriously. All forms of prejudice-motivated bullying are taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.

We keep a record of different discriminatory-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of such incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and take action to reduce incidents.

We also closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of overrepresentation of pupils with different characteristics. We also review attainment data which shows how pupils with different characteristics are performing, in particular to help identify whether there are areas of inequality which may need to be addressed.

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against students by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

## **6 Positive Action**

We will take positive and proportionate action designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, students with particular protected characteristics, such as through targeted support.

## **7 What we are doing to build strong relations**

We prepare our students for future life and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students. Our work was strengthened in this area by the work around an intentional curriculum which was a whole school focus in 2018-2019 and continues to be in place.

We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination, including Black Lives Matter and women's rights across the curriculum. We use materials and resources that advocate diversity including in terms of race, gender, sexual identity, gender identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping. We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour. Students themselves lead some of this work at Chew Valley School through Change and Create Teams, such as Women's Rights or the Equalities Team, which are high profile.

We also seek to foster good relations between pupils, including by promoting tolerance and friendship, and through assemblies dealing with relevant issues.

## **8 Reasonable adjustments for students with a disability**

We adhere to the duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with a disability. The Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

The DfE non-statutory advice regarding the Equality Act 2010 states that this duty can be summarised as follows:

- "Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a student with a disability when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the student faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.

Schools are not subject to the requirement of [the] reasonable adjustment duty concerned with mak[ing] alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties."

The school will consider the reasonableness of adjustments based on the circumstances of each case. Factors a school may consider when assessing the reasonableness of an adjustment, may include the financial or other resources required for the adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other students, health and safety requirements and whether aids have been made available through the Special Educational Needs route. Cost will inevitably play a major part in determining what is reasonable.

## **9 Accessibility planning**

Chew Valley School has carried out accessibility planning for students with a disability. The accessibility plan is aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which students with a disability can **participate in the curriculum**;
- Improving the **physical environment** of schools to enable students with a disability to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- Improving the availability of **accessible information** to students with a disability.

## **10 Roles and Responsibilities**

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. We will provide training, guidance and/or information to enable them to do this.

- **Governing body**

The LSP and/or the governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

The governing body keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment.

- **Headteacher and Leadership Team**

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

- **Teaching and Support Staff**

We expect all of our teaching and support staff to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge any discrimination, harassment and victimisation throughout the school
- deal fairly and professionally with all discriminatory incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's equality principles and values, for example, in providing materials that give positive images of the protected characteristics
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all students
- support different groups of students in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult

We will provide training and guidance on equality for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure. We will reiterate the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting at the start of the school year.