



## **Introduction**

On 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011 the public sector single equality duty came into force covering the following “protected characteristics”:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The School must also have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination based on marriage or civil partnership status.

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws in a single framework. It simplifies the law, removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with it. It also strengthens the law in important ways, to help tackle discrimination and inequality.

King Edward VI School is a public body and is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty. This duty is an ongoing one. It ensures that we consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to our own employees – and that these are kept under review. It supports good decision making and encourages us to understand how different people will be affected by our activities, so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs.

## **General Duty and Specific Duty**

The equality duty has two strands: the General Duty and the Specific Duty.

Under the General Duty, Academies must have due regard to the:

- elimination of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;

- advancement of equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- fostering of good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Effectively this means that the School, as an Academy, must keep the three aims of the duty ever present in its mind when planning activities and developing policies. Compliance with the General Duty may involve the School treating some people more favourably than others. In order to meet the three aims of the General Duty, the School publishes this Policy to outline its commitment to comply with the Equality Act 2010 in every respect.

### **Published Information**

The School has in place the following documents providing evidence of compliance with the Equality Duty:

- Equality Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Disability Policy
- Examinations Policy
- New Staff Induction Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Teaching for Learning Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Sex and Relationships Education Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Handbook
- Application Forms for prospective employees
- Information pack for prospective employees

All these documents are kept under review to ensure the School is meeting its equality duty.

### **Responsibility**

The Governing Body and senior management of the School will work proactively in promoting equal opportunities, fostering good relations and tackling unlawful discrimination. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring the School meets its equality duties.

The Senior Management Team has responsibility for the implementation of the School's Equality Policy.

## **Discrimination**

The School is committed to promoting equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- **Direct Discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or their sexual orientation.
- **Discrimination by perception:** treating someone less favourably because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic, whether or not they actually do have that protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination:** where a policy is in place that applies to everyone but can disadvantage on the grounds of a protected characteristic, and is not justified.
- **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, whether or not the conduct is directed at them personally.
- **Victimisation:** someone is treated unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint by someone else under the act.
- **Disability Discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified unfavourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

## **The School's Equal Opportunities Policy**

We aim to provide an environment that will promote equality of opportunity for all our people, including:

- eliminating unlawful direct and indirect discrimination;
- guaranteeing that no one receives less favourable treatment on grounds of their age, ethnic origin, colour, disability, creed, marital status, nationality, race, religion, culture, gender or sexual orientation;
- eradicating bullying, harassment, prejudice, human stereotyping and unfair discrimination; and
- valuing, celebrating and learning from our diverse people.

Developing knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity both within and outside the curriculum is particularly important.

Our staff ensure that:

- teaching methods include and engage all students;
- teaching resources motivate and are sensitive to different groups, cultures and background;
- prejudice, stereotypes and unfair discrimination inside and outside the classroom are challenged routinely;
- teaching strategies are reviewed and updated regularly to take account of knowledge and good practice in relation to equal opportunities;
- they examine critically their own assumptions and attitudes towards different groups; and
- we monitor the performance of all our people, including analysing patterns of behaviour and achievement of different groups, for example:
  - patterns of attendance and exclusions;
  - differential attitudes towards work and towards others;
  - patterns of friction and hostile behaviour including bullying; and
  - the impact of any action taken as a consequence.

Staff appointments are made on merit with recruitment designed to attract applications from those with the most appropriate levels of qualification, experience and skill.

Our staff can see, check and if necessary correct any personal information held on them in electronic form.

### **Information gathering and engagement**

The collection of information is crucial to supporting the School in making decisions about what actions would best improve opportunities and outcomes for those with protected characteristics.

The School does this a number of ways:-

- Equal Opportunities data for staff

As an on-going policy, staff are requested to complete Equal Opportunities forms when commencing employment with King Edward VI School; these are collated and reviewed annually. Since staff appointments are made solely on merit those with the most appropriate levels of qualification, experience and skill will continue to be employed, but allowing for positive action during recruitment and promotion processes when there are two or more candidates of equal merit to address under-representation in the workforce of persons who share a protected characteristic.

- Student Performance

All students at King Edward VI School are given equal opportunities to achieve their potential. Data regarding examination results will be reviewed annually against student data held related to protected characteristics and will be used to see if certain groups could benefit from a revised curriculum.

- Religious beliefs and cultural background

King Edward VI School is open minded to all faiths and world views. Through prayer and reflection our students are predominantly, but not exclusively, offered a Christian experience and outlook on personal, local and world events. Religious belief and affiliation play no part in decisions about admission. However, local community leaders and religious leaders will be invited to provide input to the School on areas that they believe affect their community.

### **Equality Priorities for Action**

At the date of review, King Edward VI School considered the following to be priorities for action with regard to our Equality Duty:

1. Achievement and Progression of Students. To address issues affecting specific students, we will use data to monitor and analyse enrolment, retention, contribution, achievement and progression of students with relevant protected characteristics and identify any trends, actions to meet the specific needs of students with different disabilities. Targets are set to improve retention and progress where appropriate.
2. Relationships with External Groups and Communities. In order to encourage a greater interest in K.E.S. in all local primary Schools, we aim to promote relationships with communities or groups that have historically proven hard to reach. To this end, the Admissions Policy was amended from 2016 to make it easier for students in receipt of free school meals to gain admission to the School.
3. To Monitor and Act on Differences in Attainment Between Defined Groups of Students. In order to gain a greater awareness of differences in attainment between groups of students, we use data to examine differences in attainment between males and females, different ethnic backgrounds and other defined groups, in particular when considering entry/transition, SEN/impairment and to note occurrences of inequality due to ethnicity, gender or disability.

## **Due Regard**

Equality implications are considered before and at the time the School develops policies and makes decisions. The School will also review information and data used to identify priorities for the Equality Policy (e.g. engagement with stakeholders, achievement data).

## **Monitor and Review**

The School will review information and data used to identify priorities for action (e.g. engagement with stakeholders, achievement data). Following this review, the School will revisit the Policy and republish as necessary, but not less than annually with a full review not less than four yearly.