

# Featherstone High School

## Equality Duty (Equality Information and Objectives)



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**Statutory Policy**

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## Context

Our school is a large Inner London, 11-18 comprehensive. We have a diverse community of over 1780 students on roll and employ over 200 staff. Within our community there are: over 26 different ethnic backgrounds; more than 10 different religions; 83.4% of students have EAL; 10% of students have SEND; 29.3% of students come from families on low income (a more detailed breakdown of the school population is available on request).

Equality is at the heart of Featherstone High School's motto "together we achieve". FHS understand that, in order to enable all members of our community to achieve their full potential, we need to be proactive and positive in ensuring everyone is given equal treatment and opportunities, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability, age or any other of the protected characteristics (A full explanation of "protected characteristics" along with detailed information on both the Equality Act and Discrimination Act can be found in appendix 1 of this document).

We welcome our general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations amongst our whole community.

## Equality Objectives

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment (particularly sexual harassment), victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - FHS aims to tackle discrimination, harassment (particularly sexual harassment) and victimisation in a proactive way by promoting tolerance and understanding for all people through a broad and balanced curriculum and through all of the school's systems.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - FHS aims to remove disadvantage for people who share one or more of the protected characteristics
  - FHS aims to celebrate people who share a protected characteristic
  - FHS aims to continue to close the attainment gap between all groups of pupils especially those from ethnic minority & black caribbean backgrounds.
3. Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it:
  - FHS aims to promote tolerance and understanding amongst the whole school community.

(An outline of the ways in which these objectives will be achieved can be seen in appendix 2 of this document).

## Roles and responsibilities

### The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Principal.

**SLT will:**

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors
- Have a named individual to oversee and act as a conduit for staff feedback related to this policy
- Support the Headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary.

**All staff will:**

- Have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives
- Resolve incidents of discrimination and know how to recognise and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- Strive to promote equality and inclusion by incorporating people from the protected characteristics in lesson plans, resources and images
- Understand that they are not to discriminate on the grounds of the protected characteristics
- Attend relevant training and apply strategies and gain knowledge for their roles.

For more information about our work on equalities at Featherstone High School please contact:

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**Mr Manish Madhas** (Member of governing body with responsibility for equality issues).

## **Appendix 1: Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty**

### **What is Equality?**

Equality is the principle of giving equal opportunity to all people irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or any other recognised area of discrimination.

### **What is Diversity?**

Diversity is the acceptance that we are all different but we are all equal. Diversity focuses on valuing and celebrating the strengths in people's differences.

### **Protected Characteristics**

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of the following characteristics:

- Sex (gender)
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Age, marriage and civil partnership are also 'protected characteristics' but are not part of the school provisions related to students.

### **Direct discrimination**

The Equality Act (2010) rules against direct discrimination – it is not permitted for a person to be treated less favourably in relation to one of the protected characteristics than they would otherwise be treated.

### **Indirect discrimination**

Indirect discrimination, whereby a provision or practice is applied which discriminates in relation to a relevant protected characteristic and, as a result, places an individual at a disadvantage.

### **Harassment**

The act also defines harassment as engaging in unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, due to one of the protected characteristics.

### **Victimisation**

The act sets out the following as a definition of victimisation: treating someone badly because they have done a 'protected act' (or because you believe that a person has done or is going to do a protected act).

A 'protected act' is:

- Making a claim or complaint of discrimination (under the Equality Act)
- Helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information
- Making an allegation that you or someone else has breached the Act
- Doing anything else in connection with the Act.

If you do treat an individual less favourably because they have undertaken a 'protected act' then this will be unlawful victimisation. The Equality Act makes it clear that there has to be a link between the actions of an individual and the treatment of them.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission gives the following example of victimisation:

'A tutor shouts at a student because he thinks she intends to support another student's sexual harassment claim. This would amount to victimisation'.

(See: [www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/what-victimisation](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/what-victimisation)).

Schools must not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, nor victimise or allow harassment in the following ways:

- Through their admissions arrangements, or by non-admittance
- In the way education is provided
- In the way the school permits the pupils access to a benefit, facility or service, or by not permitting access
- By not providing education
- By suspending from school
- By subjecting the pupil to any other detriment. The responsible body of a school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure discrimination does not take place.

The DfE provides guidance on how to deliver this in practice:

- Decision makers in schools must be aware of the public sector equality duty to have due regard to the three principles set out above when making decisions or taking action. Decision makers must assess whether their decision or action will have implications for a pupil or group of students with a protected characteristic
- Schools must have due regard to the three principles set out above when drafting and amending policies and procedures. Policies and procedures should be reviewed as per guidelines
- The public sector equality duty must be integrated into the day to day functioning of the school and analysis required to comply with the duty must be undertaken with rigour
- Schools must not delegate their public sector equality duty to anyone else. The above duty is referred to as the General Duty

In addition, the school aims to meet its Specific Duty by:

- Publishing information to demonstrate how the school is complying with its public sector equality duty (which will be updated at least annually) in Featherstone High School Equality Objectives.

## Appendix 2: Outline of actions taken in achieving equality objectives

Below are some of the ways in which FHS works to achieve their Equality Objectives. This list is not extensive and other actions may be taken when opportunities present themselves or when specific issues arise. The Equality Lead, with the Race & Equalities Working Party (made up of staff, students and parents/carers) will devise, implement and evaluate the school's strategic plan.

1. FHS aims to tackle discrimination, harassment and victimisation in a proactive way by promoting tolerance and understanding for all people through a broad and balanced curriculum and through all of the school's systems:
  - a. Assemblies, Reflections and PSHE/RSE are used to address key issues and offer opportunities for the promotion of tolerance and understanding as well as providing students with the opportunity to discuss issues and ask questions
  - b. Strong values based behaviour systems set out clear expectations and are used to address all forms of discrimination and victimisation in a robust and consistent manner
  - c. A broad and balanced curriculum offers knowledge and experience for students of all abilities and an equality of education for students who share one or more of the protected characteristics
  - d. High quality planning and teaching ensures all students are able to access our challenging curriculum and achieve success regardless of their starting point or learning needs.
2. FHS aims to remove disadvantage for people who share one or more of the protected characteristics:
  - a. FHS works hard to provide trips and experiences which enrich the learning and cultural capital of all students. This can include but is not restricted to: in school workshops; theatre trips; visiting artists; public speaker training; master classes
  - b. Where appropriate, FHS provides financial support for students. This can be for uniform, trips, equipment, university entrance exams or any other such need.
  - c. FHS provides free peripatetic music to all interested students
  - d. A broad and balanced curriculum enables students to access courses appropriate to their needs as well as developing their understanding of the world
  - e. A flexible approach to the use of school resources ensures all students can access lessons regardless of physical disabilities and any other barriers to learning
  - f. FHS celebrates people who share a protected characteristic through assemblies, reflections and curriculum lessons. FHS has regular, public celebration of the diversity within our community. This includes, but is not limited to: Arts Week, Curriculum Week & Science week - as well as through the careful selection of speakers and visitors to the school.
3. FHS aims to continue to close the attainment gap between all groups of pupils especially: those from ethnic minority & black caribbean backgrounds.
  - a. Careful data analysis is used to identify gaps in attainment and to inform intervention planning
  - b. Intervention carefully targeted and planned to ensure all students receive the support needed to succeed
  - c. Mentoring is used in all year groups to support students' academic progress.
4. FHS aims to promote tolerance and understanding amongst the whole school community:

- a. Assemblies, Reflections and PSHE/RSE are used to address key issues and offer opportunities for the promotion of tolerance and understanding as well as offering students the opportunity to discuss issues and ask questions
- b. Parent/carer meetings & consultations are used to ensure our wider community is working with us to promote tolerance and understanding
- c. Strong values based behaviour systems set out clear expectations and are used to teach students the importance and rewards of partnership, inclusion, care and respect.

#### **How will we know we have been successful?**

1. SMSC Assemblies tracker will demonstrate quality coverage of key areas of equality with clear, consistent and positive messages being communicated
2. Online PoS along with FHS curriculum policy will evidence a broad and balanced curriculum offered to all students
3. Behaviour data will demonstrate robust response to and low numbers of incidents relating to prejudice and discrimination of any nature
4. Attendance data for intervention, trips and enrichment (including peri lessons) will demonstrate participation from students of all abilities and those who share a protected characteristic
5. Whole school and departmental data analysis will evidence a narrowing gap in attainment between different groups
6. A well planned and comprehensive RSE and PSHE PoS for all year groups will evidence the specific attention given to developing understanding and tolerance while also breaking down prejudice
7. Low numbers of pupils withdrawn from RSE along with minutes from parental meeting and consultations will evidence the schools work to promote tolerance
8. Development Visits and learning walk data will evidence high quality teaching and learning and appropriate levels of challenge and scaffolding in all lessons
9. Financial records will demonstrate where financial assistance has been provided for students who share a protected characteristic.

#### **Associated Documents**

The following documents can be found on the Staff Intranet under the Policies tab:

- Curriculum Policy
- SEND Policy
- EAL Policy
- RSE Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Appraisal Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- Uniform Policy.