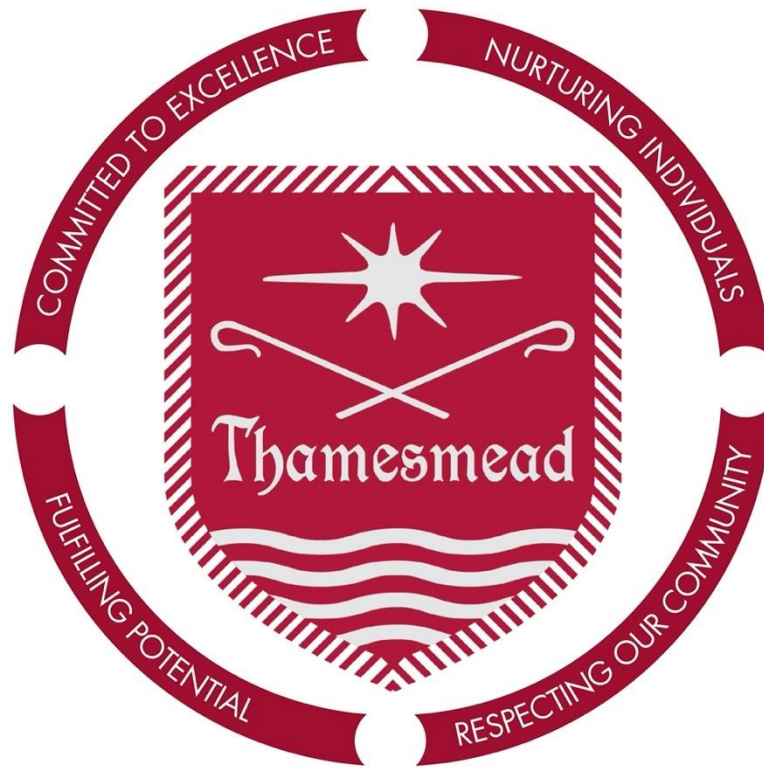


THAMESMEAD SCHOOL



EQUALITY POLICY

Person Responsible	P. Reeves
Governors Committee	Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare
Review Period	Annually
Date of Review	Summer 2023
Date of Next Review	Summer 2024

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1. Introduction

At Thamesmead School, we have a strong commitment to fairness and equality in everything that we do.

- We try to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect
- We work hard to make sure that the school is a safe and secure environment for everyone
- We recognise that people have different needs, and we understand that treating people equally does not always involve treating them all exactly the same
- We recognise that for some students, extra support is needed to help them to achieve and be successful
- We try to make sure that people from different groups are consulted and involved in our decisions, for example through talking to students and parents/carers, and through our School Council and Student Leadership Team
- We aim to make sure that no-one experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination

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.

Meeting our duties to promote community cohesion, and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students, supports how we meet the needs of different groups of students and how we foster good relations.

We welcome the emphasis in the Ofsted inspection framework on the importance of narrowing gaps in achievement which affect, amongst others:

- Students from certain ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- Students who are supported by the pupil premium
- Students who are disabled
- Students who have special educational needs
- Boys in certain subjects, and girls in certain other subjects

2. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it (See appendix 1)
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Equality Duty Statement

Equality Act 2010

At Thamesmead School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and provision for all pupils, staff, parents and carers irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, age or socio-economic background.

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, the Disability Equality Duty 2005 and the Equality Act 2010. We, at Thamesmead School, are committed to meeting our public sector duties and acknowledge that we have a statutory duty to:

- Eliminate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and wider community.
- Promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people of different backgrounds, cultures, genders, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

3. 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 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 for Thamesmead School.

4. 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, students and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every three years
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and students
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors
- Identify any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and students
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors
- Support the identification 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 gained knowledge to their roles
- All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 9 of this policy.

5. Eliminating discrimination

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every year as part of the school's programme for Continuous Professional Development.

The Head is responsible for monitoring equality issues, they regularly liaise with staff and governors regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

6. Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. students with disabilities, or gay students who are being subjected to homophobic language)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim students to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all students to be involved in the full range of school activities)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how students with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own students

7. Fostering good relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RPE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English, students will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures

- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Students will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting a range of representatives from different community groups into school, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of students within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of students from a range of backgrounds. All students are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

8. Equality considerations in decision-making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to students with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

The school keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is completed and recorded at the same time as the planning form for school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored with the completed form.

When a policy is reviewed by the senior leadership team an Equality Impact Assessment will be completed as part of the process to ensure we have considered our equality duties in setting policy. Governors then check that this assessment has been completed as part of this review. A record of this is maintained by the clerk. (Appendix 3)

9. Equality objectives

Objective 1

Narrowing achievement gaps in progress and attainment between groups of students (including gender, disadvantaged and SEND)

Why we have chosen this objective:

We have identified that gaps in attainment exist between groups of students.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- Produce a detailed plan as to how we will spend our pupil premium and catch up funding.
- Analyse our outcomes annually to identify any gaps
- Include specific targets within our SDP to address these gaps

Progress we are making towards this objective:

- Our pupil premium plan is written and is being implemented.
- We have identified our gaps from 2022 outcomes and addressed these in our 22-23 SDP

Objective 2

Developing student and staff understanding of protected characteristics and how equality and diversity can be better promoted

Why we have chosen this objective:

So that we can be confident that staff are equipped to support learners and colleagues with protected characteristics and promote equality and diversity within our community.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- Produce a whole school plan to promote equality and diversity within the school community.

Progress we are making towards this objective:

- We have a school plan on how we aim to better promote equality and diversity and are delivering this.
- We have delivered a series of assemblies on the topics of equality and diversity.
- We have delivered whole staff CPD on equality and diversity on two of our inset days in 2022-23 and specific training for curriculum leaders and pastoral leaders, and senior leaders in 2022.

Objective 3

Reviewing the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all students by providing appropriate levels of challenge and supported by scaffolding and differentiation as necessary.

Why we have chosen this objective:

To promote an ethos of quality first teaching within our classrooms and an understanding amongst our staff that every teacher is teacher of SEND.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- Provide CPD opportunities for staff on what quality first teaching looks like in practice
- Dedicate time for staff to commit to reviewing and developing curriculum provision for levels of challenge.

Progress we are making towards this objective:

- CPD has been delivered on quality first teaching for our staff
- Curriculum Areas have utilized CPD time to review and refine curriculum provision to ensure appropriate levels of challenge are planned for all learners.
- Engaged with external review activities to assess and advise on levels of challenge in practice.

Objective 4

Reducing the number of internal exclusions and suspensions for SEND & Disadvantaged students.

Why we have chosen this objective:

We have identified from our data that SEND & Disadvantaged students are more likely to receive these sanctions than those who are not.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- Identify and utilize all available support strategies to prevent exclusion/ suspension.
- Consider the suitability of alternatives to internal exclusion/ suspension in each circumstance.
- Apply reasonable adjustment for SEND or Disadvantaged students where necessary or appropriate

Progress we are making towards this objective:

We have seen a reduction in suspensions and internal exclusions for serious misbehaviour incidences in these cohort of students.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) will update the equality information we publish, at least every year.

The PSED (Public Sector Equality Duty) will be reviewed annually.

This document will be reviewed by governing body Personal Development Behaviour and Wellbeing Committee at least every 3 years.

This document will be approved by governing body Personal Development Behaviour and Wellbeing Committee and the Headteacher.

11. Links with other policies

This document links to the following policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Disciplinary and Capability Procedure Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Fire evacuation policy
- PSHE and Citizenship Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy

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.

- **Direct discrimination by association** – discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic
- **Direct discrimination by perception** – discrimination against someone because the others think they possess a particular protected characteristic

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

Context

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: 6 '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 <https://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 excluding 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.

Appendix 2: The Protected Characteristics: key points

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Age*

The Act protects people of all ages (in a school context this applies to staff, parents and adult members of the community)

* This does not apply to students in schools e.g who are taught in particular year groups.

Disability

Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, which would include things like using a telephone, reading a book or using public transport.

We recognise our duty to make reasonable adjustments for staff, students and parents to help them overcome disadvantage resulting from an impairment.

Gender reassignment

The Act provides protection for transsexual people. A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender.

Marriage and civil partnership

The Act protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected. This applies to employment.

Pregnancy and maternity

A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled. A student may not be denied education because she is pregnant.

An employee's period of absence due to pregnancy-related illness cannot be taken into account when making a decision about her employment.

Race

For the purposes of the Act 'race' includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. A racial group can be made up of two or more different racial groups (eg Black Britons)

Religion or belief

In the Equality Act, religion includes any religion. It also includes a lack of religion, in other words people are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Humanism is a protected philosophical belief but political beliefs would not be protected.

Sex

Both men and women are protected under the Act.

Sexual orientation

The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people.

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessments

Assessment of the Impact of a Policy on Equality & Diversity

Policy:

Impact assessed by:

Date:

1. What is the potential for this policy impacting a person or group with a protected characteristic differently (favourably or unfavourably) from everyone else?

2. How would this be evidenced?

3. Is there evidence that the operation of the current policy might impact a person or group with a protected characteristic differently from everyone else?

YES/NO

4. If the answer to 3 is 'Yes', please provide details and evidence.

5. How might the new policy change this?

6. Are there any other changes to the policy which might impact a group with a protected characteristic differently from everyone else?

YES/NO

7. If the answer to 6 is 'Yes', please provide details and evidence.

8. Policies are required to reduce or eliminate inequality and disadvantage and promote diversity. Does this assessment indicate that the Policy passes or fails this test?

PASS /FAIL

Assessment of the Impact of a Trip on Equality & Diversity

The attached is part of our trip application form

Equality Impact Assessment of the trip

Does the trip cut across any religious holidays or observances (e.g Divali or Ramadan?)

Yes No

If Yes please explain what action will you take to ensure students are not discriminated by your planning of this trip.

Is this trip accessible to students with any disabilities or special educational needs?

Yes No

If No please explain what action you will take to ensure students are not discriminated against by your planning of this trip.

Will boys, girls and non-binary students have equal access to facilities?

Yes No

If No please explain what action you will take to ensure students are not discriminated against by your planning of this trip.

Are there any other considerations you need to make to ensure that all students with a protected characteristic have equal access to this trip?

Yes No

If Yes please explain what action will you take to ensure students are not discriminated by your planning of this trip.