Equalities and Cohesion Policy

Spring 2024

Every child matters at Haydon Abbey School and PreSchool.

At Haydon Abbey School and PreSchool we are committed to:

- creating a vibrant, exciting school where children enjoy their education and make good progress in a stimulating environment
- developing the whole child through their creativity and diversity
- supporting our children to grow into confident, happy, independent lifelong learners who can function as successful members of the community
- high expectations in terms of behaviour and attitude to learning.

Celebrating difference:

We welcome children from a wide range of social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Equality of opportunity and inclusion underpin all areas of learning, teaching and school life. Diversity is celebrated and our children are taught to recognise and respect the differences within our school community as well as similarities.

Excellence and enjoyment:

Excellence and enjoyment are central to our school ethos. We provide a rich, varied, creative curriculum, ensuring that every child has an equal opportunity to learn. Teachers strive to provide practical, first hand learning experiences which will meet the needs of all children, as well as meting educational requirements.

At Haydon Abbey School and PreSchool we will always:

- encourage each child to do their best and to value their own achievements
- value each other and themselves
- give positive support and encourage personal growth
- enable all children to access the curriculum with due regard to any learning, physical or emotional needs
- make sure the curriculum is exciting, interactive and well balanced with the purpose of developing the whole child
- prepare children to be responsible and caring adults and to be able to maintain a healthy lifestyle
- respect and value racial, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity to promote equality and challenge racism
- use the resources we have to provide a safe, happy and caring environment for all members of the school community
- seek ways to raise standards even higher
- aim to achieve all of the above within a partnership between teachers, pupils, parents, governors and people within our community

Race Equality

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a general duty on schools to promote racial equality. This duty means that in everything they do, schools must aim to:

- promote racial equality
- promote good race relations
- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination

"No one is born prejudiced. Children learn prejudice from the people around them. It follows, therefore, that they learn tolerance and understanding in the same way". (Prue Goodwin, Reading University).

At Haydon Abbey School, our Equal Opportunities policy aims to promote equal opportunities in all areas of school life, including race relations. We value and celebrate the diverse backgrounds of our pupils, staff and community and believe that, in learning about each other, we can eliminate racial discrimination and prejudice.

Social Inclusion

Social Exclusion can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low income, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health, poverty and family breakdown. It is vital for schools to recognise and support pupils who are at risk of social exclusion.

At Haydon Abbey School, we aim to support the social inclusion of all our pupils. We ensure equal participation by all pupils in all aspects of school life and celebrate diversity and difference.

What is discrimination?

Discrimination can be direct, indirect, intentional, unintentional or institutional. Discrimination is also unlawful. Individuals have a responsibility, in law, not to discriminate.

- Direct discrimination is where an individual or group receives less favourable treatment with some unjustifiable reason, because, for example, of sex, race or disability.
- Indirect discrimination is applying unjustifiable requirements and conditions that have a disproportionate impact on an individual or particular group.
- Institutional discrimination is the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their background or experience. It can be seen in our attitudes, behaviours and procedures that amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping which disadvantage people.

Aims

This policy aims to promote equality across all areas of school life including:

- curriculum
- teaching and learning
- progress, attainment and assessment
- admissions

- attendance, behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- pupils' personal development and pastoral care
- staff recruitment and professional development
- membership of the governing body
- partnerships with parents and communities

Responsibilities

The Governing Body:

- is committed to this policy statement and will continue to ensure that all members of the school community uphold these principles of equality of opportunity and fairness;
- welcomes and will consider all applications for staff and pupils to join the school, whatever the background or disability of the applicant;
- will ensure that guidelines and rules are in force to deliver this policy so that no child is discriminated against whilst in school or on school activities;
- will ensure that the school buildings and grounds provide easy access to people with disabilities at least in accordance with legal requirements;
- will ensure that regulations on school uniform and dress code will be applied equally to both sexes. If this code is in conflict with a religious custom, the Governors will consider representations sensitively with respect for the cultural traditions and the impact any derogation would have on the school generally;
- will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and ensure that minority groups are not unfairly treated in the implementation of the school's behaviour and exclusions policy.

The Headteacher:

- is committed to this policy statement and will be accountable for its implementation in the school;
- will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and that it is applied rigorously;
- will ensure that all appointments and selection panels give due regard to this policy so that no-one is discriminated against as regards employment or training and development opportunities;
- will promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum;
- will ensure that Assemblies and other displays around the school reflect the ethnic origins and range of abilities and activities of pupils. They should positively promote respect for other people and other beliefs;
- will ensure that staff receive appropriate training and support to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities under this policy.

All Staff:

- are committed to this policy statement and will assist in its implementation;
- will, while recognising differences, ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect;
- will not, when selecting classroom material, provide material which is racist or sexist in content. They will have due regard to the sensitivities of all pupils and endeavour to provide material which gives positive messages reflecting the diversity of the wider population;

- will undertake training as appropriate to ensure that they keep abreast of latest legislation and research.
- Class teachers will use this policy as a guide when designing schemes of work both in the choice of topics to study and in how to approach sensitive issues.
- Class teachers, in their support of classroom assistants and volunteers will encourage them to intervene in a positive way and report any incident of discrimination.

Pupils and Parents:

- are expected to behave towards each other and towards staff in a way that matches this policy and is conducive to harmonious relationships within the school community including the playground and immediate school environment.
- should be made aware through example and the school environment that discrimination will not be tolerated. Pupils should also be made aware that, if necessary, action will be taken under the behaviour policy if they do not respond to guidance from staff.

Breaches of this Policy

Pupils will be dealt with in accordance with the school behaviour policy. The Headteacher will inform parents in all cases if their child knowingly discriminates against a member of the school community, e.g. by knowingly making racist comments or displaying any form of racial prejudice. All such incidents will be recorded.

Staff will be dealt with by the Headteacher. Such action may result in a verbal or written warning depending on the circumstances. If further or more serious breaches occur, the staff disciplinary procedure will be implemented.

Parents, visitors and contractors will be asked to leave the premises and further action may be taken.

Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy

This policy will be widely distributed amongst all members of the school community. Where appropriate, it will be adapted to make it more accessible to its target audience. The policy is monitored by the curriculum and personnel governor sub-committees. The teams will report annually to the Governing Body. Parents who have concerns over any form of equal opportunities and discrimination should see the Head teacher immediately. These concerns will be reported to the relevant Governor sub-committee.

Signed _____ Ashleigh Ferdinand, Headteacher

Signed _____ on behalf of the Governing Body

Date _____

Review date _____