

Rutlish School



Equality Policy

Committee ownership for this policy: F&P, Curr, Incl, Prem, RR6, FGB	Inclusion
Must be approved by FGB: Y / N	N
Required by:	Statutory
Frequency of review:	Every 3 years
Date last reviewed:	Autumn 2023
Date of next review:	Autumn 2026
Display on website: Y / N	Y
Responsible	Assistant Headteacher
This policy will be subject to ongoing review and may be amended prior to the scheduled date of next review in order to reflect changes in legislation, where appropriate	

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1. Equality

Rutlish School is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the school community and the wider community are treated equally, fairly, and with respect by the school and by each other. This applies to the school as a place of education, a business, and an employer. Prejudice, discrimination, and victimisation are not tolerated, and we work hard to instil in our students a strong understanding of right and wrong, including the importance of inclusion, acceptance, and compassion towards others. The school's main priority is to provide the best education and care that we can, and establish a cooperative working relationship between home and school, so as to aid the development, progress, and needs of all the students in our care.

This policy sets out how the school will satisfy its duties under the Equality Act to eliminate all behaviour prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to foster good relations between persons with and without protected characteristics and promote equality of opportunity regardless of whether a person has a protected characteristic (such as race, gender, transgender, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation). The school aims to comply with this duty, in both the delivery of its services and the employment of its staff. It is created by Rutlish School's Governing Body with the help of the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher (PDWB)/Pastoral Leaders/parents/carers/students in line with the Equality Act 2010 and is the foundation of all the school's other policies – particularly the **special educational needs policy**, **admissions policy**, and the **behaviour for learning policy**.

These policies can be accessed:

- in the staff handbook
- on the school website
- from the school office
- as part of induction

Through the creation of this equalities policy, we have been able to develop a better understanding of what the challenges to equality are within the school and how we can best deal with these. This document will be reviewed annually, or any time there is an update or change to equality legislation, to ensure that it is being effectively implemented and remains focused and up to date on issues surrounding equality both within the school and nationally.

1. Roles and responsibilities

Creating a school environment that promotes equality and denounces discrimination is a whole-school responsibility and requires all members of the school community to be actively involved in breaking down barriers to learning and barriers to social and emotional development that prejudice can create.

Individuals in the school are expected to take responsibility for supporting and promoting equality in school above and beyond the responsibilities listed below. The Assistant Headteacher (PDWB) has the day-to-day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of this scheme.

We adopt 'Learning for All – Standards for Racial Equality in Schools' published by the Commission for Racial Equality as a framework of guidance on good practice and procedures in addressing issues of equality and cultural diversity.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- create and approve this document with the help of the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)/Assistant Headteacher (PDWB)/Pastoral Leaders and ensure that it is adopted correctly throughout the school
- ensure the school complies with all equality legislation and the school's equality objectives
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the equalities policy on a regular basis and make any amendments to improve on the policy when and where necessary
- nominate a named Governor to oversee the implementation of the equalities policy, monitor equality outcomes, and regularly report back to the rest of the Governing Body

- ensure that parents/carers are informed of any incident related to this scheme which could directly affect their child
- ensure that staff training needs on unconscious bias and anti-racism training are met
- ensure that staff training needs on relationships, health and sex education are met

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher, with the support of the rest of the Senior Leadership Team, will:

- promote the single equalities policy both within the school and externally to the rest of the community
- ensure that all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities regarding the promotion and delivery of equality in school through staff training
- report back to the Governing Body on how the policy is working and any amendments that they feel should be made, as well as feedback from staff, students and parents
- challenge inappropriate attitudes, use of language, behaviour and social conditioning
- tackle (unconscious) bias and stereotyping
- take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation occurs

Staff

School staff are expected to:

- ensure that they are up to date and aware of the contents of this policy and the school's policy towards all types of discrimination
- ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all students regardless of any protected characteristic
- ensure the curriculum is delivered in a non-discriminatory way so that any issues do not subject students to discrimination
- challenge inappropriate attitudes or language, behaviour and social conditioning
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies as outlined in the school's behaviour for learning policy
- show a commitment to undertake development and training within this area
- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to students
- promote a positive working environment
- report back to their managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, either by staff, students, or any other member of the school community, so that these incidents can be reviewed and action taken where necessary

Students

Students at the school are expected to:

- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination
- promote a positive work environment and a positive attitude towards equality when both in school and off the school site
- report to school staff any incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour, discrimination or victimisation that they know to have occurred
- work to promote the anti-bullying strategies outlined in the school's behaviour for learning policy
- set a good example regarding behaviour and social awareness to younger students and their peers

Parents, carers, and visitors

Parents, carers, and visitors to the school are expected to:

- familiarise themselves with the school's single equality policy and support the scheme by promoting a positive attitude towards equality at home
- work with the school to resolve any incident relating to discrimination or victimisation that their child is involved in
- respect and follow our equality when visiting the school
- ensure they comply with the guidance for visitors in delivery of information that could be perceived as biased, prejudice or favouring certain groups of people, type of belief or identity over another

2. Key Groups at Risk

While the school recognises that any person or group of people can become victim to discrimination, victimisation or unfair treatment, people may be more at risk of becoming victims of inequality due to:

- Race
- Disability
- Gender and transgender
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

You can find all the information about our school's SEND provision including our provision for inclusion in the school's SEND policy and the school's accessibility plan.

The culture and structures within Rutlish School provide the following to help protect these groups:

- a committed senior management team that sets a culture within the school that values all students and allows them to feel a sense of belonging
- an ethos of setting high expectations of attainment for all students with consistently applied support, this includes clear policies on behaviour
- an effective strategic role for the SENDCo, Head of Inclusion and Pastoral Leaders
- working with parents and carers as well as the students themselves
- continuous professional development for staff
- clear systems and processes to help staff identify those most at risk
- working with staff and agencies to provide intervention
- a healthy school approach to promoting equality, that includes curriculum content

3. Promoting Equality and Social Awareness in School and Within the Local Community Community Cohesion

The school expects all of its students and staff to act respectfully towards members of the wider community that the school is part of.

Inclusion

Promoting and practising inclusion in school lessons, around the school site, during all school activities and into the wider community is a key part of developing a positive attitude towards equality and people from different backgrounds.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value and our policies, procedures and activities take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and the kinds of barrier and disadvantage, which people may face.

Student Voice

Through our support of student voice we encourage our students to have confidence in voicing their opinions and taking responsibility for the world around them. It is important that we teach our students how to engage in mature social interactions and get along with a variety of different types of people. This is developed through student voice by interactions between students from different year groups, students and staff, and students and the wider community.

Student leadership is a strong element of the school experience. We understand that students have ambition, initiative, motivation and passion and we offer opportunities, guidance and support to ensure all our students can maximise their potential. More information can be found on the school website.

4. Recruitment

Rutlish School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, gender reassignment, religion or belief, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation. We acknowledge that unfair

discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the equal opportunities policy outlined in this policy is the foundation for all its activities.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

More information about our recruitment procedures can be found in the school recruitment policy.

5. Staff

Equal opportunities for staff

As part of our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment, the school will ensure that:

- all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law;
- staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community wherever possible;
- as an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce;
- we respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice;
- we ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams

Staff discipline and suspension

Rutlish School is committed to ensuring that all school staff are treated fairly and consistently and this is held to account through our staff discipline policy, professional code of conduct, and staff grievance policy.

The education and wellbeing of our students is our main priority. Any member of staff who creates a barrier to learning for our students will be disciplined. The school's staff appraisal policy provides more information on how the school monitors staff performance. We hope that staff will feel confident to voice complaints and grievances in the confidential environment of the school and that they will trust the school to deal with their grievances fully, promptly, and fairly. The school puts great faith in all its employees, and hopes never to have to discipline anyone as a result of misconduct.

6. Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school behaviour for learning policy takes full account of the duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for students with special educational needs and disabilities. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups, and will take action to address any concerns that arise in this area.

Read our school attendance and behaviour for learning policies for more information on the processes surrounding these topics.

7. The Curriculum

In our curriculum, equality is explored as a means of personal and social development. This will be prominent in the PSHE and RE curriculums, but may be discussed within other subject courses as appropriate.

Each curriculum area will be reviewed in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflects the principles set out in this policy. Staff are encouraged to teach and use resources that model positive images and show a balanced view of our diverse and multicultural society. All departments will monitor in-house and external resources that are inclusive and promote equality of access.

8. Monitoring and Review

This single equality policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body, unless there is specific reason for it to be reviewed earlier (for example an incident involving members of the school community or new legislation).

Governors will review how effective it is in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relationships between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Governors will also review evidence that it is being put into practice in school by staff and students, and whether there is any need for extra training or development sessions across the whole school to ensure it is promoted and implemented as much as possible.

9. Information will be gathered through:

- identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics. This helps us develop and monitor policies and procedures. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language;
- student attainment and progress data relating to different groups;
- student views, actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution;
- information about how different groups access the whole curriculum and how they make choices between subject options;
- sports and activities choices of all groups;
- uptake of the enrichment programme offer by group;
- exclusions data analysed by group;
- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;
- data on the recruitment, development, and retention of employees;
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion;
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage

At regular intervals throughout the year the Headteacher/Senior Leadership Team will provide monitoring reports for review by the Governing Body. These will include:

- progress against targets relating to equality and future policies
- student and staff population
- key initiatives

10. Outcomes

One of the most important indicators of how successful we are as a school in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. Where robust analysis of outcomes reveals poorer outcomes for any particular groups, an impact assessment will be carried out and a plan of action put in place to aid these outcomes. Action will outline:

- objectives and specific actions to be taken
- expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria)
- clear timescales
- who has lead responsibility
- resource implications
- specified dates for review

11. Equality Impact Assessments

Impact assessments are carried out as part of the review of all school policies and assess whether school policies or plans are having a negative or adverse, or positive impact on groups and individuals within the school community.