

# TITUS SALT SCHOOL



Policy 01-002

Equality of Opportunity and Accessibility



## 1.0 Introduction

Titus Salt School welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief and sexual orientation. No discrimination based on these attributes and values will be tolerated.

We are committed to promoting understanding of the principles and practices of equality and justice and aim to equip our students with an awareness of our diverse society and to appreciate the value of difference.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Through a proactive approach to inclusion we aim to ensure our students have equality of access to opportunities. We will work to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to education and extra curricular activities and that we address fundamental prejudices against disability in both students and adults.

Students within the Designated Specialist Provision (DSP) will be included as widely in the mainstream curriculum as possible and be as fully integrated into the pastoral life of the school as is applicable to each student.

## 2.0 The Law and Discrimination

Titus Salt School will ensure it promotes awareness of the law as it applies in The Equality Act 2010. A brief synopsis is included in Appendix 1.

## 3.0 Aims

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

### 3.1 All students are of equal value

We see all learners, potential learners and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity.



### **3.2 We recognise and respect difference**

Treating people equally (3.1) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity.

### **3.3 We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

### **3.4 We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment retention and development**

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion and in continuing professional development:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

### **3.5 We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:



- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- women and men, girls and boys.

### **3.6 We consult and involve widely**

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- women and men, girls and boys
- people with differing sexual identities.

### **3.7 Society as a whole should benefit**

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- women and men, girls and boys
- people with differing sexual identities.

### **3.8 We base our policies and practices on sound evidence**

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information which shows our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and on the basis of which we decide on specific and measurable objectives.

Evidence relating to equalities is integrated into our self-evaluation documentation.

### **3.9 Measurable objectives**

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted (3.6) and the evidence we have collected and published (3.8).

The objectives which we identify take into account school, national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

Our equality objectives are integrated into the School Improvement Plan. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.



## 4.0 Equal Opportunities in Practice

### 4.1 Curriculum

We keep each curriculum subject, or area, under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out in section 3.

### 4.2 Ethos and organisation

We ensure the principles listed in section 3 apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- students' progress, attainment and achievement
- students' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents and carers
- working with the wider community.

### 4.3 Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in section 1:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents to be reported to the Pastoral Governors Committee and if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents and how they are dealt with.

### 4.4 Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students, parents and carers and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.



#### 4.5 Staff development and training

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.

#### 4.6 Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and as appropriate, to all students and their parents and carers. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

#### 4.7 Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination. A member of the Senior Leadership Team has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in section 4
- support students in their class for whom English is an additional language or whom have learning or physical disabilities
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

#### 4.8 Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and governing body.

#### 4.9 Monitoring and Review

A system of monitoring has been established through the School Development Plan self-review process and is built into action plans. Titus Salt School monitors the impact of its policies and procedures on different groups as defined by levels of relative disadvantage, disability, gender, racial background and special educational needs.



In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate, according to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin, national status and gender.

## 5.0 References

- The Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty (under Equality Act 2010)
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools - Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities May 2014
- Disability Discrimination (prescribed Times and Periods for Accessibility Strategies and Plans for Schools) Regulations 2005
- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 *replaced by the single Public Sector Equality Duty under Equality Act 2010*
- Equality Impact Analysis: a workbook. DfE April 2012
- Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The phrasing at certain points reflects the specific duties required by the Equality Act 2010 to publish information and evidence (section 3.8) and to formulate and to publish specific and measurable objectives (section 3.9).



## Appendix 1

### The Law and Discrimination

#### 1.0 The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced nine major Acts of Parliament and almost a hundred sets of regulations which had been introduced over several decades. It provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by getting rid of anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time, and it extends protection against discrimination in certain areas.

#### Who and what the Act applies to:

In England and Wales the Act applies to all maintained and independent schools, including Academies, and maintained and non-maintained special schools

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student:

- in relation to admissions
- in the way it provides education for students
- in the way it provides students access to any benefit, facility or service
- by excluding a student or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The “responsible body” is the governing body or the local authority for maintained schools in England and Wales, the education authority in the case of maintained schools in Scotland and the proprietor in the case of independent schools, Academies or non-maintained special schools. In practice, any persons acting on behalf of the responsible body – including employees of the school – are liable for their own discriminatory actions, and the responsible body is also liable unless it can show that it has taken all reasonable steps to stop the individual from doing the discriminatory action or from doing anything of that kind.

The Act deals with the way in which schools treat their students and prospective students: the relationship between one student and another is not within its scope. It does not therefore bear directly on such issues as racist or homophobic bullying by students. However, if a school treats bullying which relates to a protected ground less seriously than other forms of bullying, for example; dismissing complaints of homophobic bullying or failing to protect a transgender student against bullying by classmates – then it may be guilty of unlawful discrimination.

The school’s liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a student has left the school but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between school and student, such as the provision of references on former students or access to “old students” communications and activities.



## 2.0 The Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act came into force in October 2000. The Act allows people to claim their rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), in all UK courts and tribunals instead of going to the European Court in Strasbourg. The Act requires all public authorities in the UK to act in compliance with the Convention rights and has many implications for local government activity.

### **What do 'sexual identity' and 'religion or belief' mean?**

Sexual orientation is defined as sexual orientation towards people of the same or the opposite sex, or towards people of either sex. Employees are protected against discrimination on grounds of their sexual orientation, whether they are heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual.

Religion or belief is defined as 'any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief'. ACAS guidance indicates that when deciding whether a particular set of beliefs can be said to amount to a religion or belief, tribunals will have regard to whether there is 'collective worship', a clear belief system, a profound belief affecting the way of life or view of the world.