

# The Tiffin Girls' School

## EQUALITY SCHEME

UPDATED JUNE 2019

### Introduction

1. We welcome our 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), marriage and civil partnership, and of maternity and pregnancy, religion and belief, and sexual identity.
2. The school complies with the specific duties of the Equality Act to publish equality information annually and to set and publish equality objectives at least every four years. This information would usually be published on the school website.
3. This Equality Scheme brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality.
4. This scheme is a whole school policy which is closely linked with a number of other whole school policies, including but not limited to:
  - Admissions Arrangements
  - Teaching and Learning
  - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
  - Behaviour for Learning
  - Anti-Bullying
  - Exclusion
  - Recruitment and Appointments
  - Accessibility Plan
  - Staff appraisal
  - Discrimination Incident Policy

### Guiding Principles

5. In fulfilling our legal obligations, we are guided by nine principles:

#### **Principle 1: All learners and staff are of equal value**

We see all learners, potential learners, their parents/carers and members of staff 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 marital status
- Whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual identity

## **Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference**

Treating people equally (principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to:

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity, so that difference cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls, women and men, are recognised
- Religion, belief or faith background
- Sexual identity

## **Principle 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, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment

## **Principle 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, promotion and 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, marital status and sexual identity and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

## **Principle 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 (including those with intermittent medical needs) and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Women and men
- People of differing sexual identity

### **Principle 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 people as well as non-disabled
- People from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men
- People of differing sexual identity
- Parents, carers, community and governor links

### **Principle 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 people as well as non-disabled and including those with intermittent medical needs
- People of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men
- People of differing sexual identity
- Parents, carers, community and governor links

### **Principle 8: We base our policies and practices on sound evidence**

We maintain information which shows our compliance with the public sector equality duty and on the basis of which we decide on specific and measurable objectives. Evidence relating to equalities is integrated into our self-evaluation documentation.

### **Principle 9: Measurable objectives**

We formulate specific and measurable objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted (principle 6) and the evidence we have collected. (principle 8).

The objectives which we identify take into account 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, as required by the Equality Act, report annually on progress towards achieving them.

### **The curriculum**

6. We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out above.
7. All students are encouraged to value their own cultural heritage and the culture and lifestyles of others, and to show respect for self and others while at the same time finding common ground to talk to one another and valuing living together in a community.

8. Every member of staff understands their responsibility for establishing a positive climate for debate and extending opportunities for discussion. They address widely held misconceptions to avoid the risk of students with limited experience arriving at consensus views of doubtful validity.

### **Ethos and organisation**

9. We ensure that the principles listed above 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 wellbeing
  - 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, carers and guardians
  - working with the wider community

### **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying**

10. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraph 1. These include:
  - Prejudices around disability, special educational needs and students with medical 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
11. We keep a record of prejudice related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.
12. Prejudice related incidents are identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with in compliance with our anti-bullying policy.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

13. The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.
14. The Pay and Personnel Committee has consideration regarding the implementation of this policy.
15. 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.
16. A member of the Senior Leadership Team, Assistant Head Pastoral Y7-11, has day to day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of this policy.

- 17.** 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 guiding principles
  - Differentiate where appropriate for identified groups within lessons in line with this policy

#### **Information and resources**

- 18.** We ensure that the contents of this policy are known to all staff and governors and as appropriate to all students and their parents and carers.

#### **Religious observance**

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

#### **Staff development and training**

- 20.** We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development both as individuals and as groups or teams.
- 21.** This is facilitated through the appraisal process.

#### **Breaches of the policy**

- 22.** Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, in line with our grievance, capability or disciplinary procedure as appropriate and as determined by the Headteacher.

#### **Monitoring and review**

- 23.** We collect, analyse and use data in relation to employment, performance and achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status and gender.
- 24.** In conjunction with good teaching and learning practice and school based interventions, the impact of this policy will be evidenced in positive student attainment and achievement.
- 25.** We will publish our equality scheme and objectives.
- 26.** We will review and revise the scheme every four years
- 27.** We will consult with relevant stakeholders in setting objectives.

## Equality objectives set January 2021

- To promote understanding, inclusion and good relationships between everyone in our school community.
- To increase whole school awareness of sensitive use of language around all individuals with protected characteristics.
- To develop further specific whole school initiatives to support those that identify as LGBT.
- To develop further specific whole school initiatives to support our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Colour) community and to ensure that our students, staff and governors gain greater insight and knowledge of systemic and institutional racism
- To develop further specific whole school initiatives to support the mental health of all.

## Demonstration of actions taken to fulfil our responsibilities

- The school continues to promote its vision and set of underpinning values: 'An intellectually stimulating and outward-facing school, enabling students to flourish and give to society'
  - Community: Collaboration, Active Citizens, Celebrate diversity
  - Love of Learning: Inspiration, Embrace knowledge, Creative & Critical thinking
  - Character: Integrity & Respect, Courage & Resilience, Independence & Initiative
- The Headteacher presents to the parents of every year group at the start of the academic year, reminding the school community of the importance of focusing on our vision and values.
- Headteacher Awards are given to students aligning with the school values of 'Community', 'Love of Learning' and 'Character'. At the start of the year these were handwritten but with lockdown this continued as a virtual award. Over 1,150 were given out to students during the academic year 2019-20.
- The school achieved a Stonewall Bronze Award in August 2019, demonstrating that it is an inclusive school environment, specifically supporting those that identify as LGBTQ. The school has held an LGBTQ week for the last three years and is in the calendar for this academic year.
- A student survey in October 2019, identified the following:
  - 92% of students who responded (690) either agree or strongly agree that they feel safe at school
  - 88% of students who responded (688) either agree or strongly agree that the school community is inclusive and tolerant of all faiths, heritage, gender and sexuality groups
  - 71% of students who responded (688) either agree or strongly agree that the school promotes positive wellbeing and supports good mental health
- A parent survey of June 2020, identified the following:
  - 91.4% of parents responded (419) either agree or strongly agree 'My child is happy at this school?'
  - 95% of parents responded (419) either agree or strongly agree 'My child is well looked after at this school'
  - 94.3% of parents responded (419) either agree or strongly agree 'This school is well led and managed'
  - 77.6% of parents responded (419) either agree or strongly agree 'This school supports my child's positive mental health and wellbeing?'

- The students enjoy coming to school and learning and the very high attendance rates demonstrate this: Years 7-11 was 96.58% and Years 12 and 13 was 94.7% for 2019-20
- Last year's new Behaviour for Learning policy was reviewed by staff and students and an updated version implemented for September 2020.
- The students demonstrated a strong culture of giving and respect for others by raising £15,000 for 19 charities in the academic year 2019-20 despite the school year being cut short due to lockdown. Within lockdown students made over 1,100 items of PPE for the Sewing4Kingston initiative.
- The school held a Black History Month in October 2019 and again in 2020. There were assemblies, daily bulletins, Q&A sessions, guest speakers, tutor presentations to share and other activities. A lot of these were created and led by students.
- The school holds a Mental Health Week each year, and recognises Time to Talk day and World Mental Health Day. We hold whole school assemblies and train mental health ambassadors. A number of staff have been trained in mental health first aid and a daily lunchtime drop in session was provided. A new mental health policy was approved by the Governing Board and a mental health plan created. A new wellbeing space has been created and a therapy dog introduced for September 2020.
- The PSHE curriculum delivers a series of lessons throughout Years 7-11 that explicitly teaches about the rights of people with protected characteristics and the values of inclusion and diversity for us as a society. For further information the school's PSHE curriculum outlines, see <http://www.tiffingirls.kingston.sch.uk/Our-School/Pastoral/PSHE.aspx>
- The school recognises different religious events, for example, Jewish new year, Diwali, Eid
- We encourage students to support one another, both in their year group and across years. Students act as academic mentors to one another, demonstrating we nurture a collaborative and supportive environment
- Incidents of bullying, discrimination or racism in the school are very low
- The school's House system is a way for students from different year groups to come together and develop new friendships and a healthy camaraderie.
- Student leadership is encouraged in school and the school council meets termly to discuss solutions to issues raised within the year group forums. This is overseen by the DHT and Head Girls.
- We provide Pastoral Parent Talks throughout the year, for example, Bereavement, Friends programme etc, that are intended to support parents and their children
- During lockdown the school implemented a number of initiatives to support students:
  - Created an intranet site 'TGS QuarantEens' which provided information and guidance on mental health and wellbeing, as well as a BLM subsite in response to the death of George Floyd.
  - We held virtual whole school and year group assemblies
  - The Headteacher provided 'drop in' virtual chats
  - There was a weekly tutor time
  - Pastoral lessons were delivered weekly