

Equality (Inclusion) Policy

Meir Heath Academy



Approved by:	Mrs M Southern	Date:
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Meir Heath Academy **Equality (Inclusion) Policy**

At Meir Heath Academy we aim to provide a secure, inclusive and purposeful environment, which fosters high expectations for all. We try hard to develop inclusive values/equal opportunities and social justice for all and this vision is shared between staff, students, governors, parents/carers. All our pupils, staff and visitors should feel valued, cared for, listened to and encouraged to challenge themselves to be the best that they can be.

The school currently has 356 children on roll aged from 4 – 11 years, boys and girls. The school is divided into seven year groups, two classes per year group. All areas of the school are available for use by all pupils. Specialist staff and ‘class teacher responsibilities’ are allocated to year groups.

Inclusion is at the heart of our school development, permeating all policies so that they increase the learning and participation of every student. Both classroom practice and extra-curricular activities encourage the participation of all students. Learning support for individuals is one way we try to make lessons accessible for all students and support is also provided by planning lessons which recognise different starting points and learning styles for individuals and groups of students.

Our inclusive school culture ensures changes in policies and practices are sustained and passed on to all new staff and students. Our governors are kept well informed through governor meetings and their views all positively encouraged.

‘Inclusion’ at Meir Heath Academy focuses on all aspects of school life and is concerned with the participation of all members of our school community. We continually engage in critical examination of what can be done to increase the learning and participation of our children and carefully consider the diversity of students with the school and its locality.

Through this Equality Policy, Meir Heath Academy seeks to ensure that no member of the school community, or any person through their contact with the school, receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, where the person lives, or, spent convictions.

At Meir Heath Academy our guiding principles for inclusion address our duties as outlines in the following statutory documents:

- Equality Act 2010
- Special education Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001
- Educations and Inspections Act 2006

Meir Heath Academy's inclusive principles are:-

- All learners are of equal value – All learners and potential learners are of equal value and benefit equally from school policies, practices and programmes, whatever their ability, background, gender or cultural identity.
- Relevant differences are recognised - Treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Policies, practices and programmes do not discriminate, but may be differentiated to take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face.
- We foster positive attitudes, relationships and a shared sense of belonging - Policies and programmes promote positive attitudes and interaction, mutual respect and good relations.
- Staff recruitment, retention and development - Policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in recruitment, professional development and promotion.
- Current inequalities and barriers are addressed and reduced - In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of policies and programmes, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist between people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity.
- Policy development involves widespread consultation and involvement – People affected by a policy or programme are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. Such consultation is both direct and through representative organisations, and is based on principles of transparency and accountability.
- Society as a whole benefits - Policies and programmes benefit society as a whole, locally, nationally and internationally, by fostering greater cohesion and greater participation in public life of people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity.

Community Cohesion

Children come from a predominantly White British background; at the time of writing this policy, 11 pupils, 3% of pupils being EAL, 9 pupils, 2.5% of pupils being FSM and 1 pupil, 0.28% being under special guardianship and 2 pupils, 0.56% being looked after pupils. Socially children tend to come from the same socio – economic grouping, and there is a limited amount of diversity in the range of ethnic and religious backgrounds. Meir Heath Academy has 10 pupils, 2.8% of its children on the Special Needs register covering all four areas of need – communication and interaction, cognition and learning, physical and sensory and social, emotional and mental health needs. There were no permanent exclusions in the twelve month period preceding this document.

Collecting and using data effectively

The data we collect and collate can inform our school of developing patterns and trends. This information will be used to support the school's self-review process and also to inform future planning, ensuring that all pupils, staff and visitors, including those with protected characteristics, needs are catered for.

Responsibilities

The governors as a whole are responsible for: drawing up, publishing and implementing the school's equality objective, making sure the school complies with the relevant equality legislation; and making sure the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed monitoring progress towards the equality objectives and reporting annually.

The Principal (Mrs Southern) and SENDCo (Mrs Askey) work together in:

- making sure steps are taken to address the school's stated equality objectives;
- making sure the Equality Policy and Accessibility plan are readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils, and their parents and guardians know about them;
- producing regular information for staff and governors about the plans and how they are working;
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out;
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including prejudice-related incidents;
- Enabling reasonable adjustments to be made, in relation to disability, in regard to students, staff, parents / carers and visitors to the school.

All staff are responsible for:

- promoting equality and community cohesion in their work;
- avoiding unlawful discrimination against anyone;
- fostering good relations between groups; and
- dealing with prejudice-related incidents;
- being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- taking up training and learning opportunities.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for following relevant school policy.

Staff Development

Staff undertake training and development in relation to equality and cohesion in terms of professional responsibilities as well as statutory requirements as and when appropriate. This may take the format of staff meeting updates or full training sessions when needed. All staff are given equal opportunity to take part in staff training and have access to courses appropriate to their professional development and responsibilities as well as statutory requirements.

Reviewing and monitoring how we are creating a school that is welcoming and inclusive

We will review the accessibility action plan annually through the Governor's Standards, Policy and Curriculum Committee during the Summer Term.

We will look again at the information we have to see if actions taken have had a positive impact on opportunities and outcomes.

This can be done by:

- Half-termly Pupil Progress meetings.
- Regular Pupil Interviews
- Staff awareness being constantly raised.
- Parent's opinions are welcomed relating to all school matters.

A copy of Meir Heath Academy Equality (Inclusion) Policy and the Accessibility Plan is available to view on the school's website and parents, carers and users of our school can request a from the school office. Requests can be made to have a copy in large print.