



Thirsk School

& Sixth Form College

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) Policy

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TOLERANT
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HAPPY
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INSPIRATIONAL
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RESILIENT
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SUCCESSFUL
▼

KNOWLEDGEABLE
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Thirsk School & Sixth Form College

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) Policy

Document Status			
Date of Next Review	January 2024	Implemented by	Governing Board
Origin of Policy	Adapted		
Date of Policy Adoption by Governing Board: 26 th January 2021		Signed	
		 Emma Lambden Headteacher  Nick Horn Chair of Governors	

Introduction

Departmental guidance¹ states that:

5.16 Under specific duties set out in previous equality legislation, schools were required to produce equality schemes in relation to race, disability and gender. Under the specific duties, there are no requirements to create equality schemes. But schools may choose to continue producing such a scheme, if it helps them to comply with the Equality Duty, and they can expand it to cover the additional protected characteristics.

This Single Equality Scheme for schools in North Yorkshire provides a format for addressing the statutory duties of the Equality Act 2010 and The Children and Families Act 2014. This supersedes and brings together all previous statutory duties in relation to race, gender and disability and addresses the duty to promote community cohesion, thus meeting the School's statutory duties in these areas.

The scheme also highlights how our School has worked with and listened to the staff, students, parents and carers to inform development of action plans and the need and commitment required to ensure the scheme is a success. This is underpinned by a commitment to promoting positive relationships and understanding between all groups within our school community.

This document sets out how students with the following protected characteristics will be protected in our school from harassment and discrimination:

- disability
- gender
- race
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity

As well as delivering high quality services to our students, the school is also committed to being a good employer and as such, this scheme outlines how we meet our varied duties in terms of recruitment and employment practices. We are also committed to be fully inclusive of all community users, including parents and carers. As such, this scheme therefore also sets out how we will work to overcome any discrimination related to the other protected characteristics:

¹ The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities May 2014 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

² A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment and the Act extends this (except for children) to the provision of goods and services, but age as a protected characteristic does not apply to students in schools. Schools therefore remain free to admit and organise children in age groups and to treat students in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development without risk of legal challenge, even in the case of students over the age of 18.

- Age²
- Being married or in a civil partnership

The impact of this scheme is reported annually to Governors.

Aims of the single equality scheme

- To articulate the school's commitment to equality, which permeates all school policies and practices.
- To ensure that everyone who belongs to, or encounters, our school community is valued and respected.
- To promote equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.
- To comply with statutory duties under equalities legislation in one document.

Purpose of the Equality Scheme

This equality scheme is the school's response to the specific and general duties in the current equality legislation, which has been brought together under the Equality Act 2010 (see [appendix 1](#)). It is an attempt to capture how the school is systematically establishing and implementing good practice in equality and diversity across all areas of school life. This includes a response to all aspects of social identity and diversity.

This Equality Scheme sets out how the school will:

- Eliminate discrimination;
- Eliminate harassment or victimisation related to any aspect of social identity or diversity;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote positive attitudes to all aspects of social identity and diversity;
- Encourage participation by disabled people and people representing different aspects of social identity in public life;
- Take proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of students.

Planning to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity

This scheme is underpinned by the core belief that all children and young people belong to their local community and share the same rights to membership of that community and a quality education.

We set equality objectives with associated actions, which are outlined below.

2021-22

Our plan identifies what we will be doing over the coming years to make our school more accessible to the whole community, irrespective of background or need. It encompasses our duties to promote positive outcomes in relation to race, gender and disability, but also identifies actions to address other social identities. It encompasses our anticipatory duties to plan for the reasonable adjustments needed to overcome barriers that may impede some of our students.

The action plan is renewed annually and progress towards the equality objectives within it is reported on regularly to Governors, and this information is published at least annually. Our equality objectives are published at least once every four years. This action plan is understood and implemented by all staff and is available on the school website.

School Aims

As a school:

- We will try to ensure that people have equality of opportunity whether they have a protected characteristic or not; and
- We will aim to build good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

In the Governors' Statement of Educational Aims, the school sets out to ensure that every individual:

- Achieves their full academic potential by participating in a rich, stimulating and challenging curriculum;
- Is able to contribute to society as active, compassionate and responsible citizens; and
- Flourishes culturally, intellectually, morally, physically and emotionally through participation in a wide range of opportunities.

The school aims to prepare its students for adult life in a multi-racial, interdependent world by:

- Promoting the equality of all groups;
- Promoting community cohesion by encouraging the development of mutual respect and good relationships between persons of different racial groups and genders;
- Challenging and seeking to eradicate discrimination on any grounds, including those of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, or other protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. We will act quickly to deal with all bullying, including that which is aimed at groups as well as individuals, such as racist bullying (see behaviour management policy);
- Giving a high profile to rights and responsibilities by promoting human rights, justice and fairness throughout the curriculum and wider school community;
- Ensuring that all students have a right to equality of access to what is best in educational provision; and
- Ensuring that there is no restricted access given to some students because of stereotyped views of ability.

Accessibility Plan

The full accessibility plan ([appendix 2](#)) lists relevant timings and responsibilities are shown. Timings are on-going unless otherwise stated. Costs are shown where known at the time of writing.

Access to Curriculum:

Create effective learning environments for all utilising feedback from student groups.

Reinforce responsibilities of teachers at staff meetings and training days.

Ongoing programme of staff training to reflect diverse students within the school

Create and Circulate “Reasonable Adjustments” Classroom Checklist to all staff
Seek feedback from school council and student survey (annual survey)
Audit and adapt school curriculum regularly in line with issues

Access to wider curriculum:

Ensure participation in school activities.

Audit participation in extra-curricular activities (annual survey)
Identify any barriers to ensure school activities are accessible to all students
Seek advice re alternative accessible venues for residential trips as required.

Impact Analysis:

Ensure all policies consider the implications of Disability Access.

Analyse impact of Curriculum Policy
Analyse impact of Behaviour Policy
Analyse impact of Educational Visits

Premises:

Increase site access to meet diverse needs of students, staff, parents and community users.
Review personal evacuation plans as necessary and improve signage of evacuation procedures

Attitudes:

To promote positive attitudes towards all protected characteristics
Review Assembly and PSHCE Curriculum
Regular items for newsletter highlighting Assembly/ PSHCE content & National calendar days
Regular items for newsletter highlighting achievements of students with protected characteristics

Information:

Availability of documents in alternative formats.
Provide alternative formats (e.g. large print) as required.
Monitor Parental uptake of documents in alternative formats
Review accessibility of school documentation for Parents
Regular items for newsletter highlighting achievements of students with protected characteristics

Equality objectives

Objective 1: Equity and excellence

The school will continue to:

Monitor and evaluate attainment and progress of all students in Years 7-13 with specific reference to groups with different characteristics. These will include ethnicity, first language, disability and special educational needs, and students in the disadvantaged cohort. Currently we know that our ‘vulnerable’ students do not always/consistently make the progress desired. Our aim is for all students who are vulnerable to secure outcomes at least in line with expectations aligned to their key stage 2 outcomes; or higher, where the impact of their vulnerability may have already resulted in KS2 outcomes lower than their apparent abilities suggest they should have achieved. Likewise, we

will always respond to data in terms of the students we target and therefore it is important to stress that equality and excellence is about all students and not just groups with different characteristics.

To achieve this the school will:

Regularly monitor attendance patterns and monitor rewards and consequences.

Monitor trends in the needs of SEND students to identify whether additional support or staff training will be required.

Assign Personal Development as a whole school role to one of our existing Assistant Headteachers with the expectation that they will look at the whole child ie equity of offer for all.

Objective 2: Policies and Information

The school will continue to:

Conduct equality impact assessments for any new or substantially amended policies. Not all policy changes and information are shared with students, but pertinent messages regarding some policies such as DEI, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying etc are always shared with students through assemblies/PSHCE or other more appropriate student friendly mediums. Currently we do not view all policies through the 'DEI lens' but intend to review this starting with our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies. Has this been reviewed to check it has due regard for public sector equality duty?

During the period of significant disruption to learning caused by Covid 19, we worked to share pertinent messages on areas such as DEI, Behaviour and anti-bullying. However, we are conscious that some of these messages may not have had the impact of delivery in school. Since returning to more normal schooling, these messages have been a part of 'catch-up', to ensure we are supporting all students in our public sector equality duty.

To achieve this the school will:

Conduct equality impact assessments for any new or substantially amended policies (see [appendix 2](#) for recent examples). By July 2022, all policies will have considered equalities issues, and all staff will be trained in the use of Equality Impact Assessments.

A timetable of policy review will be in place by January 2022

Objective 3: Personnel

The school will continue to:

Ensure all vacancies are filled using the principles of equal opportunities and safer recruitment.

Upon appointment ensure that there is regular training for staff around DEI in the workplace and also around our young people both in terms of its' delivery and whole school culture.

School Vision and Values

The school's ethos and values (available on the school's website) reflect the school's ambitions for all its students. These values align with the key requirements set out in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement for developing an inclusive curriculum and the school is committed to setting suitable learning challenges; responding to students' diverse learning needs; and overcoming potential barriers to for individuals and groups of students.

School Context

The nature and context of the school population informs action planning for the equality scheme.

SEND: Breakdown of number of students with different SEN need types by year group.

Year	E	K	ASC	MLD	SEMH	SLCN	SPLD	PD	HI	VI	MSI	PMLD	OTH	Total	PP
7	2	26	2	3	4	6	10	0	2	0	1	0	0	28	13
8	4	19	1	3	7	5	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	23	11
9	0	36	2	9	8	4	12	0	0	0	0	1	0	36	13
10	3	20	2	3	8	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	1	23	9
11	3	22	1	0	11	2	10	0	0	1	0	0	0	25	8
12	0	9	1	1	3	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	9	0
13	0	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Total	15	135	10	19	43	22	45	1	3	1	1	1	1	147	54

Key:

E = Education Health and Care Plan

K = SEN support

ASD = Autistic Spectrum Condition

MLD = Moderate Learning Difficulty

SEMH = Social, Emotional and Mental Health

SLCN = Speech, Language and Communication Needs

SpLD = Specific Learning Difficulty

PD = Physical difficulty

HI/VI/MSI - Hearing/visual/multisensory impairment

PMLD = profound and multiple learning difficulty

Oth = other

PP = Student premium

SEND: Table showing comparison with North Yorkshire and National figures:

	SEN total	EHCP	SEN support	ASD	MLD	SEMH	SLCN	SpLD
School%	16	1.5	14	6.9	13	29	14	30
National %	12.9	1.8	11.1	9.7	23	19.2	8.8	20.8
North Yorkshire%	11.1	1.5	9.7	12.2	16	23.3	11.1	23.9

Key Pastoral data:

	7		8		9		10		11		All Years	
English Add'l Lang	3.55%	6	5.15%	10	3.45%	5	3.27%	5	1.94%	3	3.55%	29
Free School Meals	15.98%	27	16.49%	32	12.41%	18	9.80%	15	9.68%	15	13.11%	107
Looked after Children									0.65%	1	0.12%	1
Medical Condition	24.85%	42	24.23%	47	35.86%	52	33.99%	52	40.00%	62	31.25%	255
Pupil Premium	29.59%	50	29.90%	58	27.59%	40	24.18%	37	19.35%	30	26.35%	215
SEN Needs	33.73%	57	41.75%	81	40.69%	59	39.22%	60	37.42%	58	38.60%	315
SEN Provision	18.93%	32	12.89%	25	24.83%	36	16.34%	25	17.42%	27	17.77%	145
Service Children	5.33%	9	9.28%	18	2.76%	4	8.50%	13	5.16%	8	6.37%	52

Ethnicity:

Any other Asian	2
Any other Black	2
Any other Ethnic Group	7
Any other White Background	14
Black Caribbean	1
Gypsy/Roma	1
Not Yet Obtained	11
Refused	7
White - British	693
White - English	157
White - Irish	1
White - Scottish	1
White and Any other ethnic group	2
White and Asian	3
White and Black African	3
White and Black Caribbean	3
White European	5
White other	2

Thirsk School & Sixth Form Teaching Staff:

22 male teachers

44 female teachers

Thirsk School & Sixth Form Support Staff:

17 male support staff

23 female support staff

Staff Turnover:

From 1st September 2021 to current:

1 male teacher

1 female teacher

1 female support staff

From 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021

3 male teachers

2 female teachers

2 male support staff

2 female support staff

The training taken to position the school well for the equality and diversity agenda

- Weekly staff briefing updates on students to teaching and non-teaching staff
- Regular updates on SEND students provided to staff and Governors
- Whole school 'student audit' starting December 2020 to run termly by form tutors looking at all areas of the vulnerability checklist plus, so that we can identify need where we feel individuals or indeed cohorts are not receiving equity of offer. During the period of school closure there have been shifts to this audit. However, it is reinstated from January 2022.
- DEI Action plan produced December 2020.

School provision

Examples of reasonable adjustments the school makes as a matter of course

- The SENDCo maintains close contact with parents and carers of SEND students, communicating in a variety of means (letter, email, telephone, face-to-face meetings) to ensure that parents remain well informed of their child's progress and receive a swift response to any concerns they may have.
- The school has an extensive programme at each entry point to work closely with the students' previous schools, thereby easing the students' transition to the school and ensuring that pastoral staff are well informed of any existing concerns or issues.
- School staff have been briefed on reasonable adjustments that could be made to lessons to support the learning of all students.

- Target-setting is personalised and reflects the school's ambition for all its students.
- Students on the SEND register have teaching notes to inform teachers on how to differentiate for these additional needs, this is supplemented by regular briefings from the SENDCo.
- The school follows advice and guidance from specialist teachers from the inclusion team to adapt teaching materials so that students with visual and hearing impairments and other physical disabilities have full access to the curriculum. E.g. use of VNC software and devices to mirror teacher screen onto personal device.
- The school purchases specialist equipment such as height adjustable tables as advised by professionals such as occupational therapists and physiotherapists so that students with disabilities have full access to their curriculum
- Staff support students to complete certain activities (e.g. online surveys) when required.
- Staff support exam access arrangements as required.
- Student voice activities are a regular element of school planning, including surveys and participation in the School Council.
- The school provides all teaching staff with new surface-go technology in order to support teaching and learning.

Outcomes for students

Outcomes for students are analysed against social identity issues, i.e. ethnicity, disability and aspects of vulnerability identified by the school. This is compared with the outcomes made for all students.

These processes form part of the school's equality impact assessment processes to determine the impact of our provision on improving outcomes for identified students and include:

- Students' attainment - analysis of end of key stage results for students of particular groups
- The quality of particular groups of students' learning and the progress they make throughout the school
- The behaviour of particular groups of students; e.g. exclusion data for particular groups of students
- The extent to which students from particular groups contribute to the school and the wider community; e.g. participation and achievement on extra-curricular/extended school activities, participation on school trips for particular groups of students
- Attendance data for all students and for particular groups
- The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents/carers of particular groups of students; e.g. attendance at parents' meetings, involvement in planning provision, consultation with, results of parental feedback
- Impact of the use of specific individual budgets; e.g. Student Premium Strategy

Roles and Responsibilities in Implementing the Single Equality Scheme

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that staff and parents are informed about the Single Equality Scheme;

- Ensure that the scheme is implemented effectively;
- Manage any day-to-day issues arising from the policy whether for students or for the school as an employer;
- Ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the scheme;
- Liaise with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available;
- Monitor the scheme and report to the Governing Body, at least annually, on the effectiveness of the policy;
- Ensure that the SLT are kept up to date with any development affecting the policy/action plan arising from the scheme; and
- Provide appropriate support and monitoring for all students and specific and targeted students to whom the scheme has direct relevance, with assistance from relevant agencies.

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation;
- Support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary;
- Appoint a DEI Champion on the Governing Board;
- Inform and consult with parents about the scheme;
- Monitor admissions with the aim on ensuring the school population broadly reflects community in the extended area from which students are drawn;
- Evaluate the action plan annually; and
- Publish equality objectives annually via this policy

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Have general responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this scheme;
- Provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the scheme;
- Identify good quality resources and CPD opportunities to support the scheme; provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues; and
- Assist in implementing reviews of this scheme as detailed in the School Development Plan.

People with specific responsibilities:

- The SENDCo, Assistant Headteacher (Personal Development) or relevant Head of Key Stage will be responsible for maintaining and sharing with all the staff those vulnerable students and how their needs will be met;
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the specific needs of staff members are addressed;
- The Assistant Headteachers (Pastoral and Personal Development) are responsible for gathering and analysing the information on outcomes of vulnerable students and staff, respectively; and
- The Assistant Headteachers (Pastoral and Personal Development) are responsible for monitoring the response to reported incidents of a discriminatory nature.

Parents/Carers will:

- Have access to the scheme (available on the School website);
- Be encouraged to support the scheme; and
- Have the right to be informed of any incident related to this scheme that could directly affect their child.

School Staff will:

- Accept that this is a whole school issue and support the Single Equality Scheme;
- Be aware of the Single Equality Scheme and how it relates to them;
- Make known any queries or training requirements;
- Know how to deal with incidents of concern, including bullying and how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Know procedures for reporting incidents of racism, harassment or other forms of discrimination;
- Not discriminate on racial, disability or other grounds;
- Keep themselves up to date with relevant legislation and attend training and information events organised by the school or LA;
- Ensure that students from all groups are included in all activities and have full access to the curriculum; and
- Promote equality and diversity through teaching and through relations with students, staff, parents, and the wider community.

Students will:

- Be made aware of any relevant part of the scheme, appropriate to age and ability;
- Be expected to act in accordance with any relevant part of the scheme;
- Experience a curriculum and environment which is respectful of diversity and difference and prepares them well for life in a diverse society; and
- Understand the importance of reporting discriminatory bullying and racially motivated incidents.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for complying with the school's Equality Scheme – non-compliance will be dealt with by the Headteacher.

Appendix 1: Equality Legislation and Guidance

This equality scheme responds to the current equalities legislation.

- The Equality Act 2010 is the overarching legislation for all equality duties.

The act serves two main purposes:

- To harmonise discrimination law;
- To strengthen the law to support progress on equality.

The act supersedes or strengthens the following acts and regulations:

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Employment Equality (Religion & Belief and Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- The Equality Act 2006 Part 2
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007
- The SEN Code of Practice 2001

Overview of previous equalities legislation that has been harmonised and strengthened by Equality Act 2010:

- **Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976/2000:** statutory positive duty to promote racial equality, promote good race relations and eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- **Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1975 (and Regulations 1999), Gender Equality Duty 2007:** statutory positive duty to promote gender equality and eliminate unlawful gender discrimination;
- **Employment Equality (religion or belief) (sexual orientation) Regulations 2003** extended to education, Equality Act (Part 2) 2007. The Act sets out that is unlawful for schools to discriminate against a person:
 - in the terms on which it offers to admit him/her as a student;
 - by refusing to accept an application to admit him/her as a student, or
 - where he/she is a student of the establishment:
 - in the way in which it affords him/her access to any benefit, facility or service,
 - by refusing him/her access to a benefit, facility or service,
 - by excluding him/her from the establishment,
 - by subjecting him/her to any other detriment.
- **Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995/2005:** statutory positive duty to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: students, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to, and eliminate unlawful discrimination;

- **Education and Inspections Act 2006**, duty to promote community cohesion. By ‘community cohesion’ the school is endorsing and adopting the definition provided by Alan Johnson, 2006, as: “working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.”

Essential Further Guidance

- DfE The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (May 2014)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>
- Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance for schools
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/education-providers-schools-guidance>
- SEND Code of Practice January 2015- latest at 01.03.15 and effective from 01.04.15
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

Appendix 2: Accessibility Plan

Accessibility Plan:			
	Actioned by:	Date:	Cost:
Access to Curriculum:			
Create effective learning environments for all utilising feedback from student groups.			
Reinforce responsibilities of Teachers at Staff meetings and training days.	EL/JD	Ongoing	
Ongoing programme of Staff training to reflect diverse students within the school	RE/JD/ GH	Dates as above	
Create and Circulate "Reasonable Adjustments" Classroom Checklist to all staff	RE		
Seek feedback from school council and student survey (annual survey)	GP/ JB		
New school curriculum	MD	April 2021	
Access to wider curriculum:			
Ensure participation in school activities.			
Audit participation in extra-curricular activities (annual survey)	GP/JW/ GH	Dec 21	
Identify any barriers to ensure school activities are accessible to all students	GH	July 2021	
Seek advice re alternative accessible venues for residential trips as required.	GP		
Impact Analysis:			
Ensure all policies consider the implications of Disability Access.			
Analyse impact of Curriculum Policy	MD	April 2022	
Analyse impact of Behaviour Policy	JM/NS	April 2022	
Analyse impact of Educational Visits	GP		
Premises:			
Increase site access to meet diverse needs of students, staff, parents and community users.			
Review personal evacuation plans as necessary and improve signage of evacuation procedures	RE	Ongoing	
Attitudes:			
To promote positive attitudes towards all protected characteristics			
Review Assembly and PSHCE Curriculum	NS/JM/TAY GH	Ongoing- full review July 2022	
Regular items for newsletter highlighting Assembly/ PSHCE content & National calendar days	EL/(DAT /GH	Ongoing	
Regular items for newsletter highlighting achievements of students with protected characteristics	EL/(DAT) /GH	Ongoing	
Information:			
Availability of documents in alternative formats.			
Provide alternative formats (e.g. large print) as required.	RE/DAT		
Monitor Parental uptake of documents in alternative formats	JM/NS/ DAT	Ongoing	
Review accessibility of school documentation for Parents	DAT		
Regular items for newsletter highlighting achievements of students with protected characteristics	EL/(DAT) /GH	Ongoing	