

HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL



Policy Statement
on

INCLUSION & EQUALITY (COMMUNITY COHESION)

Drawn up by: AJH
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Revised:

COMMUNITY COHESION INCLUSION AND EQUALITY POLICY

Introduction

This Policy sets out the school's approach to promoting community cohesion, inclusion, equality and diversity. It covers disability, gender and race/ethnicity, in response to the statutory duties on schools to publish disability and gender equality schemes and a race equality policy.

This document has been produced taking account current and relevant legislation:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976 as amended in 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended in 2005, Disability Equality Duty (2005)
- Code of Practice for Schools 2002
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- The Employment Equality Act 2003
- Equality Act 2006
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Duty to promote community cohesion)
- Curriculum 2000, which incorporates a statement on inclusion, 'Providing effective learning opportunities for all children'
- Schools Admission Code of Practice 2007

This Equality Policy statement sets out:

- The school's context;
- Aims and values;
- the school's overall approach to promoting equality: community cohesion, recognising and celebrating diversity and tackling discrimination;
- specific reference to community cohesion, race equality, disability equality, gender equality;
- roles and responsibilities;
- monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact.

The School Context – What sort of school are we?

Hinchingbrooke is on the outskirts of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire in the south-east of England. It is a Local Authority school and has 1889 students aged 11-18, 956 boys and 933 girls. It has 121 teaching staff and 117 support staff and is predominately white British in its ethnic composition.

Hinchingbrooke is a comprehensive school. Whilst the intake is skewed towards students of higher ability (as shown by Key Stage 2 and 3 results as well as Midyis test data) and from more prosperous socio-economic backgrounds (as shown by free school meals statistics) we do have students of all abilities and backgrounds. We are committed to being an inclusive school which treats all students as being of equal value.

Of all students, 88.2% are white British. There are students from 16 other ethnic minority groups (as identified by DFES codes) totalling 10.7%, the largest of which are: other white background with 2.8%; mixed background 1.4% and white Asian 1.1%. There are no refugee or asylum seeker students. There is a gypsy/Roma population of 0.2%. One point two percent of children had no ethnicity identified due to the parent/carer preferring not to say or information was not obtained. These figures illustrate a slow change in the school's ethnic structure with a drop in white British students and a rise of around 2% for other ethnic groups. The vast majority of students have English as their first language.

Exclusion and attendance figures were appropriate to the ethnic groupings in the school. Therefore no one ethnic minority group was overrepresented in these areas of concern. For example, 76% of exclusions were from the white British population who had English as their first language. There were 63 fixed term exclusions in the previous year 2007-08. Of this total, 43% were students who were on the Inclusion Register (IR, a register of all students who receive additional support in school). Only 7.7% of all the students on the IR received fixed term exclusions. There was no one ethnic group identified as having a particular attendance problem.

Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Black Caribbean and gypsy traveller students are carefully monitored in terms of attendance and exclusion rates and academic achievement in accordance with the Department for Children, Schools and Families guidelines. The majority of students perform to the standards expected for KS3 and GCSE. If not, advice is sought from the Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS), students are then given specific support. Students are placed on the IR and where appropriate are identified as requiring special educational needs support.

In 2007-08 white British students constituted 86% of the 221 students on the IR. Other ethnic groups made up 11.7%. The second largest groups were other mixed background (2.2%) and other black background (3.3%). Ninety seven percent of students on the IR had English as a first language, 6 students, 2.7%, did not.

In January 2009 white British students constituted 72% of the 288 students on the IR. Other ethnic groups made up 13%. The second largest groups were white other with 8.7% followed by Pakistani with 2.8%, Black African and other Asian background both with 2.4%. Seventy nine percent of students on the IR had English as a first language, 7% did not and the languages spoken included: Italian, Hungarian, German, Norwegian, Spanish, Polish, Bengali, Swedish, Tagalog, Portuguese, Malayalam, Arabic, Filipino, Shona, Russian and Thai.

Of the 221 students on the IR in 2007-08, 48 were students with statements of SEN. Seventy one are at School Action Plus and 95 at School Action. Of the 119 with a statement or at School Action Plus: 48 were identified as having social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (BESD); 20 with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD); 12 with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD); 6 with a Hearing Impairment (HI); 11 with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD/dyslexia); 11 with a Speech and Language need (SLCN); 1 with a Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD), 4 with a Physical Disability (PD) and 6 Others.

In January 2009, of the 288 students on the IR*, 127 are statemented or at School Action Plus: 70 were identified as having social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (BESD); 23 with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD); 19 with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD); 4 with a Hearing Impairment (HI); 21 with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD/dyslexia); 19 with a Speech and Language need (SLCN); 1 with a Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD), 4 with a Physical Disability (PD) and 94 Others.

We are now in the process of collecting information on student, staff and parent disabilities and the ethnicity of staff.

Equality – aims and values

At Hinchingsbrooke we aim to provide equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards.

Hinchingsbrooke School has a respect for all cultures, recognises and celebrates the differences between people and aspires to create a community where students are well prepared for life in a diverse and pluralistic society.

This policy is based on the following core values as expressed in this school's aims/mission statement.

It is our ambition that all Hinchingsbrooke students achieve, at each stage, the highest possible step on their learning journey. They will have self-confidence, founded in their learning achievements and social skills, to become good citizens. Their physical and spiritual well being will give them energy and enthusiasm for the challenges before them. We expect that they will have pride in their success and find their school life a lasting inspiration. For our students, we seek to be the best.

Our approach to promoting equality

The overall objective of the school's Inclusion and Equality Policy is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

Through the policy, the school seeks to ensure that no students, staff, parents, guardians or carers or any other 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 dependants, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, social class, income, where the person lives or spent convictions.

The principles of this policy apply to all members of the extended school community – students, staff, governors, parents and community members.

A cohesive community

As part of our cohesive school community we have an active programme to encourage all students to participate in the wider curriculum and to voice their opinions via the student parliament plus tutor and year group representatives for sports, academic and community issues. We have representatives on Huntingdon Town Council and our choirs and orchestras represent the school at civic occasions.

Staff have access to social gatherings, participation in sporting activities and a feeling of community through the staff common room organisation. Staff membership is increasingly made up from people from Europe, Africa, America and Australasia.

The curriculum develops community relationships with voluntary groups and faith groups invited into assemblies. Each house has a charity it supports and raises money for events such as non-school uniform day.

At a locality level the school has established excellent working relationships with partner pre-school, primary and junior schools through the Hunts Net organisation. This organisation, combined with the school's specialist sports status, puts on programmes such as Key Stage 2 Gifted and Talented days and sports events. We are partners with six other secondary schools in the Huntingdonshire Secondary Education Partnership where good practice in teaching and learning is developed. Hinchingsbrooke is also a central point for the Locality Team and we work very closely with social care, the PCT and especially the Office of Children and Young Peoples' Services (OCYPS) in addressing the Every Child Matters agenda via Parental Support Advisers and the Young People's Health Clinic, Helping Hands.

The school has established good community links with schools participating in the German and French exchange programmes. We have an annual Japan Day and The Malawi Project allows the whole school to raise funds to support a number of annual visits to the country to support educational and cultural links. The school is now planning to develop similar links to schools in China and to go further by providing educational opportunities at Hinchingsbrooke for Chinese students.

The School's contribution to promote community cohesion can be grouped under the following headings:

Teaching, learning and curriculum – teaching students to understand others, promoting common values, valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting awareness of human rights and developing skills for participation and responsible action. This can be done across the curriculum but especially so via Religious Education and Personal, Social and Health Education and citizenship education. From September 2008, citizenship education will include a new strand 'Identity and diversity: living together in the UK'. Learning should challenge assumptions and address sensitive issues.

Equity and excellence – providing equal opportunities for all to succeed, removing barriers to access and participation in learning activities and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups. This will include dealing with bullying and harassment and also monitoring that exclusion and behaviour policies do not discriminate against any groups. The new Admissions Code emphasises the need for admission arrangements to promote community cohesion and social equity, and for schools to ensure that they do not deter parents from particular communities from applying.

Engagement and extended services – providing a means for children, young people and their families to promote interaction with people from different backgrounds, including links with different schools and communities locally, across the country and internationally. All schools have a core offer of extended services and consider how these can promote community cohesion. Interaction could involve:

- bringing community representatives into schools to work with students or as mentors, actively involve with parents from different backgrounds
- providing extended services for family learning and English for speakers of other languages
- providing ways for students to interact with others from different cultures and backgrounds - doing this in meaningful ways that are sustainable
- local engagement through links with community groups and organisations
- ensuring that the student voice is heard and able to effect change, including ideas from students about promoting community cohesion and ensuring the student parliament and voice are representative of all communities and individual needs
- maintaining strong links and multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies eg youth services, the police and social care
- providing information, advice and parenting programmes designed to meet the needs of different groups.

Race Equality

The Race Equality and the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 places a general duty on schools to:

- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good race relations
- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination

To do this Hinchingsbrooke has included race equality as a significant part of its Inclusion and Equality Policy and actions. We also assess the impact of this policy and the issue of race equality on the school community and especially the impact upon student attainment.

Admissions, attendance, exclusions, the curriculum, extra-curricular participation and performance at KS2, 3 and 4 are all analysed with a focus upon ethnicity and language.

Underachievement can then be identified and appropriate intervention take place.

Subject departments are encouraged to promote positive images of black and ethnic minority people and cultures and to make the curriculum relevant to all learners own experience accurately reflecting their own cultural heritage.

Ensure other school policies and procedures make reference to bilingual, BME and traveller students and that the School Development Plan makes reference to race equality.

The school has established clear processes and procedures for staff and students to report racist incidents and keeps records of racist incidents in school and reports these to the Local Authority as required by law, taking action appropriate in each individual case.

Disability Equality

The Disability discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 defines a disabled person as having:

“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

The term “disabled person” applies to students, staff, governors, parents and visitors.

Physical impairment includes sensory impairments; mental impairment includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness; “substantial” means “more than minor or trivial”; long-term is a period longer than (or likely to be longer than) 12 months.

The definition is broad and includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments and ADHD. These may all constitute a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:

Mobility; manual dexterity; physical coordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects; speech, hearing and eyesight; memory or the ability to concentrate, learn or understand; perception of risk of physical danger.

People with cancer, MS, HIV or a severe disfigurement are covered by the definition.

Not all disabled students will have SEN eg asthma. Not all SEN students will have a disability eg some behavioural problems. However, students with SEN and those with long term medical needs should be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for inclusion and equality.

In line with The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 Hinchingsbrook School acts to :

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Identify who are disabled
- monitor policies and practice and make “reasonable adjustments” to ensure disabled people are not disadvantaged
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- increase disabled peoples participation in the curriculum
- improve the environment for disabled people
- improve the delivery and accessibility of information for disabled people
- monitor disabled student progress, attainment, attendance and exclusions for any differential outcomes
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.
- publish a disability equality scheme and accessibility plan demonstrating how it intends to fulfil its general and specific duties
- involve disabled people in the development of the Scheme
- annually review and report on the scheme and revise it every 3 years

Gender Equality

The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA)

Hinchingbrooke School acts to:

- eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment
- promote equality of opportunity between females and males
- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment in employment and vocational training, for people who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment.
- consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap
- gather and use information on how the school's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services, in particular education functions
- promote gender equality in relation to job type, job grades, recruitment and promotion, working hours, training and development, appraisal, grievance procedures and disciplinary action
- consult stakeholders (ie students, parents, employees, others service users or potential service users, including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives
- prepare and publish a gender equality scheme, showing how the school will meet its general and specific duties including setting out its gender equality objectives
- report against the scheme every year and review the scheme every 3 years
- assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality

Discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief

Part 2 of the Equality Act 2006 also introduces provisions outlawing discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in education in schools.

Hinchingbrooke will not admit or refuse to admit students on the basis of their religion or belief and treat students equally irrespective of their own or their parents'/guardians'/carers' religion or belief or lack of it. This also applies to access to benefits, facilities or services. In addition students will not be excluded from school or subjected to any detriment on the basis of their or their parents religion or belief or lack of it.

Roles and responsibilities

All who work in the school have a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion, and avoiding unfair discrimination.

Our governors are responsible for:

- making sure the school complies with all current equality legislation
- making sure this policy and its procedures are followed
- making sure the governors report annually on information on community cohesion and this policy

The headteacher is responsible for:

- making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, students and their parents/carers know about it
- making sure its procedures are followed
- producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy, if necessary
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- making sure the school prospectus, school development plan and all school policies contain references to community cohesion and this policy
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination

All our staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with racist incidents, and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equality and good race relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or social class.
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- Knowing and following our inclusion and equality policy

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lays with a named member of staff (Tony Heath, Director of Inclusion) and governor (Bob Grindrod, Chair of Governors). Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- Ensuring community cohesion and this policy is addressed by the school's response to the "Every Child Matters" agenda via the Learning Development Group and ethos governors group
- Coordinate community cohesion issues with outside agencies eg Hunts Net, HSEP, OCYPS, PCT, social care
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents)
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of vulnerable groups of students (eg BME and Traveller students)
- Monitoring exclusions and attendance

Resources

Allocation of resources to community cohesion in school will be the responsibility of the head teacher.

This policy can be accessed via the school's website and the Learning Support and Inclusion page. Font size and colour can be amended to help visually impaired people.

Adults and young people of all communities and backgrounds are encouraged to contact the school to offer advice and support on community cohesion issues and especially those of race, gender and disability.

Monitoring, reviewing, assessing impact

This policy is supported by a race equality action plan and disability and gender equality schemes. These are linked with the school development plan and include targets determined by the governing body for promoting a cohesive community, inclusion and equality in the school.

A working party has been established that includes the Director of Inclusion, the chair of governors, staff and parents, with representation from disabled people and both gender groups. Students will be invited to attend and participate as will adults and students from black and ethnic minority groups, travellers and those with English as an additional language.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by staff and governors to ensure that it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

This review process will be conducted using the Cambridgeshire standards which are based on the national 'Community Cohesion Education Standards for Schools' (DfES, Home Office and Commission for Racial Equality 2004), 'Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion' (DCSF 2007, ref. 00598-2007) and 'Our Shared Future' (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007).

Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessment is used to inform future planning and decision-making.

The named member of staff and governor responsible for equality will monitor specific outcomes.

The Headteacher will provide monitoring reports for review by the Governing Body. These will include: school population, key initiatives, progress against targets and future plans.