



## **Ludlow Church of England School**

### **Equality Policy**

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Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England, and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level, and also with other local Churches. Mindful of its position as the only secondary school in its area, the school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, in both Christianity and other religions, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its students.

Ethos statement from 'Ludlow Church of England School (Instrument of Government) Order 1999

Approved By	School Performance Committee
Date Approved	October 2020
Last Revised	October 2022
Review Date	October 2023

## Equality Policy Statement

In accordance with our ethos statement, we pledge:

- To respect the equal rights of all our students
- To promote equality of opportunity
- To educate our students about equality, and eliminate discrimination
- To respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the school community
- To promote community cohesion at school, local, national and global levels, and ensure we prepare our students for life in modern Britain

This policy sets out our commitment to promote equality for all, as defined within the Equality Act 2010. This replaces existing equality legislation, such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. In the same way, our Equality Policy consolidates previous separate documents. Staff should also refer to DHMAT's HR013 Equality Policy.

We will assess our current school practices and implement all necessary actions in relation to the following protected characteristics:

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity/paternity

The school will not discriminate against children seeking admission, or with regard to how students are treated, in relation to teaching and the curriculum provision, allocating students to certain classes, applying different expectations of behaviour, dress and appearance, excluding students or subjecting them to any other sanction or in conferring rewards, facilities or services. Our school aims to involve all parents/carers as their child's co-educators, engaging them and increasing their capacity to support.

This commitment embraces our workforce in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices, such as dress code, and disciplinary procedures.

The school will be vigilant of its practice in terms of:

**Direct discrimination:**

This is unlawful for all protected grounds except, in some circumstances, age and disability in schools. Direct discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances because of a special characteristic, such as sex, race or disability. In the case of direct age discrimination, this is unlawful only if it cannot be objectively justified.

**Indirect discrimination:**

In essence, this occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all, but has a different impact on members of one or more protected groups, of which the complainant is one, and is placed at a disadvantage as a result. Indirect discrimination is unlawful unless it can be justified for reasons unrelated to the characteristic in question. (An example might be a physical strength test, which would discriminate against women, and which might be justified in relation to a job necessitating heavy lifting, but not in relation to teaching.)

**Victimisation**

Treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect to discrimination, e.g. by bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague – this is also unlawful.

**Harassment**

Unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on grounds of one of the relevant characteristics, such as race or sex – this is also unlawful in many of the situations covered by discrimination law.

**Maternity, Paternity, Shared Maternity-Paternity, and Childcare**

The overwhelming factor that contributes most to women's inequality in the labour market is becoming mothers.

In an effort to retain valued staff and reduce staff turnover costs, the school offers maternity, paternity and shared leave in line with the Dioceses of Hereford Multi-Academy Trust (DHMAT) provision. Adoptive leave is available for both parents. Special Leave with pay arrangements is in place for domestic emergencies, including breakdown of childcare arrangements, and looking after a sick child or relative. However, the school maintains the right to either refuse leave with pay for the latter reasons, or refuse leave absolutely.

Women returning from Maternity Leave normally return to the same job, and always to the same grade and pay. To ensure that women are not indirectly discriminated against, should the Maternity Leave straddle a pay award, the individual's pay progression is considered in exactly in the same manner as other staff.

It has been the practice for women returning from Maternity to return to their post on the first day of a school holiday. This can mean that the teacher covering the Maternity Leave is not paid for the holiday, despite their commitment throughout the school term. The school may pay both members of staff through the holiday period, or a part thereof, if this is considered appropriate by the Headteacher and/or relevant members of the Local Academy Body.

The school will be sensitive to the needs of staff during their pregnancy whilst working in school by making reasonable adjustments, such as removing the teacher for the duty rota, or sending a member of staff home if there is a medical outbreak that may put them or their child at risk. An individual Risk Assessment may be provided in specific circumstances.

### School Context (as at January census)

Details	Jan 2021	Jan 2022
Number on roll	566	559
% girls	49.5	49.3
% boys	50.5	50.6
% FSM	16	18
% English as an additional language	1.7	1.9
% SEND	17	16.4

### Aims

Within this context, the school will, through policy and practice, promote the following:

- The raising of educational standards for all children
- An inclusive ethos, through the curriculum and learning environment
- Equality of opportunity and access
- Positive relationships
- A celebration of cultural diversity
- The challenging of discrimination, prejudice and harassment
- A resolution of conflict in line with Christian reconciliation

### Practices

#### Teaching and Learning

- Analyse achievement data to monitor student performance, as individuals and within specific groups, and use this to inform decisions about teaching and learning.
- Carry out robust tracking and monitoring, providing timely and specific intervention to ensure all students can achieve, and gaps in achievement between groups is narrowed.
- Ensure quality-first teaching, developing students' capacity to learn (Building Learning Power), and differentiating teaching, where the individual needs of students are addressed and where teachers have high expectations of all students, and continually challenge them to reach aspirational goals and develop the life skills and attitudes they need to make the most of the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.
- Ensure the grouping of students reflects the needs of learners and does not discriminate against or disadvantage any groups of students.
- Provide an appropriate curriculum for all students, and monitor its effectiveness through tracking and data analysis.

## Quality of Provision

- Ensure there is a strong framework of pastoral support through the vertical tutoring system, with tutors at the centre of mentoring, to provide support for students, as well as developing a positive relationship with home.
- Follow Admission arrangements (see Admissions Policy) to ensure the process is fair and equitable to all students, including those with SEND, LAC, GRT students, and those with English as an additional language. Comprehensive information about a student's ethnicity, first language, religion, medical or physical needs, diet etc. is included in admission data forms, and annual updates are requested of parents/carers.
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure a disabled person (student, staff, parent/carer, and visitor to the school) is not at a disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled (see Accessibility Plan). Indeed, under the Equality Act 2010, we may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a person who is not disabled, making changes to practices to ensure, as far as is *reasonably* possible, that a disabled person can benefit from what we offer, as much as a person without a disability.
- Celebrate cultural diversity. This is achieved through aspects of schemes of work, and is conducted with particular rigour and depth through the teaching of RE and the PSHE curriculum. Resources and displays in our school reflect the experience and backgrounds of students, and promote diversity and challenge stereotypes. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.
- Ensure the curriculum reflects and values diversity and difference, and encourages students to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes. The PSHE curriculum, delivered through Tutor Time and specific focus days, along with subjects across the curriculum, contribute to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of our students.
- Co-ordinate a range of extra-curricular activities and special events, such as school visits and productions, to cater for the interests of all students.

## Behaviour and Attendance

- Analyse behaviour data (exclusions and other sanctions) by gender, Key Stage, PPG, SEND, ethnicity, monitored by the designated Assistant Headteacher and the Curriculum Learning Tutors (CLT) fortnightly, and summatively each term. Action is taken to address any disparities between different groups.
- Analyse attendance data at three-weekly review meetings with Assistant Headteacher, CLT and Educational Welfare Officer. Concerns are communicated with parents at an early stage, before formal action is taken. The school supports students with long term medical needs through an attendance plan, and we make provision for leave of absence for religious observance.
- Insist on an ethos of support, where inappropriate or discriminatory comments, symbols or practices, whether intentional or unintentional, from students or staff, are challenged and appropriate action taken.
- Establish a clear procedure for dealing effectively with bullying, shared and agreed between students, parents and staff. (See Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Report incidents of Hate Crime to Shropshire Council and Local Academy Body.

## **Partnership with parents, carers and the wider community**

- Monitor parental involvement, including attendance at Parents' Consultation meetings or SEND review meetings, and work to ensure no parents or carers are disadvantaged. Ensure reports and communications to parents or carers are clearly written and free from jargon, to encourage parents or carers to participate in their child's education. Information is provided in other formats, on request
- Work in partnership with parents and carers, and the community to address specific incidents and to develop positive attitudes to difference.
- Ensure that our premises and facilities are equally accessible for use by all groups within the community (See Accessibility Plan)

## **Leadership and Management**

- Undergo rigorous self-review through Quality Assurance mechanisms, led by the Senior Leadership Team and named Local Academy Board Members.
- Ensure staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out. Equality is incorporated in the induction programme for new staff.
- Make available the electronic staff handbook for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy.
- Review inclusive publications and communication.
- Adopt the recruitment procedures in line with statutory duties and Trust Guidance.

## **Breach of Policy**

The Headteacher will initiate and oversee a rigorous investigation as a result of complaints that a breach of policy has occurred. If it is decided that a breach of policy has occurred, the appropriate action will be taken. Regarding students, the minimum action would normally be that the incident is reported to the parents or carers, as well as the DHMAT. The school reserves the right, however, to apply the maximum sanction. In relation to staff, this aspect of misconduct would be considered impartially and with due regard to DHMAT Personnel Guidance.

## **Associated Documents:**

Accessibility Plan  
Admissions Policy  
Anti-Bullying Policy  
Home-School Agreement  
SEND Information Report  
Supporting Students with Medical Needs