

EQUALITY POLICY

Vision Statement

We, the staff and governors, aspire to ensure that all our students, irrespective of ability and regardless of anyone's doubts, achieve their potential in full; and we aspire in this way to make Thomas Mills High School the best in the country.

Extracts from A Charter of Values

"We, the staff, pupils and Governors of Thomas Mills High School, agree the following . . . as central to our purpose :

Equal value accorded to all persons

Courtesy, self-discipline and respect for others

Honesty, moral courage and integrity . . .

Extracts from Code of Behaviour

We should respect each other and treat others in the way we would like to be treated.

We should accept that everyone is different but equally important.

We should behave in a way that is not aggressive, deliberately annoying or provocative.

We should always be polite and avoid using language which might offend.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Equality Policy is a positive statement about the identity, values and practices of the school.
- 1.2 Our Code of Behaviour provides that we, the staff, governors and pupils of Thomas Mills High School, should respect each other and treat others in the way we would ourselves like to be treated. It goes on to say that 'we should accept that everyone is different but equally important; that we should behave in a way that is not aggressive, deliberately annoying or provocative; and that we should always be polite and avoid using language which might offend'. These rules and values rightly inform our Equality policy which itself also reflects our Vision Statement and Charter of Values.

2. General Policy Statement

- 2.1 We are committed to equality for everyone involved in the school (pupils, teaching and support staff, parents, visitors). This is regardless of race, nationality, ethnicity, social or cultural background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, age or disability or any other of the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.2 In accordance with that fundamental statement of policy, the school will deal with due seriousness with any incident of discrimination or prejudice, involving a pupil or a member of staff or other person connected with the school. This includes incidents of abuse, harassment or bullying. These should never be considered acceptable and should be reported promptly to the Head of Year or a member of the Senior Management Team by anyone who is aware that such behaviour has taken place.

3. Specific Policies

- 3.1 It is also appropriate that the Equality Policy deals with particular aspects of the school's activities. Pupils will have access to a common curriculum.
- 3.2 The Governors confirm that it is their intention and understanding that the adopted policies and codes of the school comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 which protects people from discrimination and harassment based on 'protected characteristics'. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. A member of the Senior Management Team is responsible for co-ordinating the school's Equality Policy, including recording and reporting to Governors any racist incidents and, if necessary, prejudice – related incidents.
- 3.3 The Governors expect staff to promote an understanding of and respect for the race, culture, religion, beliefs of everyone in the school and in the wider world. It is recognized that this can be achieved by a number of means including involvement with the community and contact with people with relevant personal experience, e.g. by visits to or by the school as well as the use of appropriate course materials and texts.

- 3.4 The school has for some years been conscious of the need to monitor the academic achievements of boys and girls and to make positive efforts to address any imbalance. The school will continue to promote an achievement culture amongst both boys and girls.
- 3.5 The school will ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all.
- 3.6 The school will not, subject to limited exceptions for literary merit or historical authenticity or as part of a deliberate effort to raise issues for discussion, permit the use of materials containing racist bias or prejudice or the stereotyping of race, nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or other protected characteristic. Within the constraints of budget and the national curriculum, staff should develop a range of topics and materials which positively promote the school's values.
- 3.7 Mindful that low self-image and ignorance can produce prejudice and stereotyping, the school will support all pupils, providing worthwhile educational experiences (in lessons, tutorial work, assemblies and extra-curricular activities) to foster positive social values and respect for all, and to develop individual self-esteem.
- 3.8 The general duties placed upon all schools are to :
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equality between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
 - Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 3.9 The school will, in accordance with the duties specified in the Equality Act 2010 :
- Collect, analyse and publish information about progress towards meeting the three general duties.
 - Publish specific and measurable objectives towards meeting the three general duties.

4 Monitoring and Assessing the Impact of the Equality Policy (- including some examples of practical ways in which the school puts the policy into practice)

- 4.1 Examination outcomes are considered to determine how the performance of all pupils compares with their prior achievement. Identified groups of pupils are considered separately also, for example, Looked After Children, those with English as an Additional Language etc. The school does this regardless of the fact that in many categories the cohort is very small.
- 4.2 The gender, ethnicity and any special educational needs of excluded pupils are recorded and the details are monitored.

- 4.3 The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator actively monitors the progress and experience of pupils with EHC Plans and of others on the SEN register through the statutory review programme and review of Individual Support Plans. The Personal Education Plan is used by Heads of Year to monitor and inform the provision for Looked After Children.
- 4.4 Advice is obtained from appropriate outside agencies depending upon identified need, for example, for those who are hearing or visually impaired, those for whom English is an additional language, travellers, young carers.
- 4.5 The academic progress of all pupils is reported and monitored through the school's reporting scheme. Those pupils who are identified as under-achieving or at risk of under-achieving are further monitored and supported through borderliner and mentoring schemes.
- 4.6 All pupils are supported through the school's Pastoral System and additional provision is made as need dictates, for example, through referral systems to both school originated support and outside agencies. The appropriateness of such intervention is monitored and adjustments made as necessary.
- 4.7 An extensive programme of extra-curricular activities is open to all pupils and their involvement is recorded and reviewed. Steps are taken to address any identified shortfall in provision.

5 Context

- 5.1 This policy was originally reviewed and amended in 2009 by Vice-Chairman of Governors and Deputy Head (Pupils) in consultation with the Senior Management Team, Pastoral Team, Governing Body, members of the Friends of Thomas Mills High School, School Councils and other stakeholders. It was initially reviewed in 2011/12 in the light of new legislation and is now reviewed annually.
- 5.2 This policy should be read in association with the following:
- Special Educational Needs Policy
 - Policy on the Thomas Mills High School Common Curriculum
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Policy on Spiritual and Moral Education
 - Policy on Extra-Curricular Activities
 - Accessibility Plan
 - Academy Policy on Admissions
 - Community Cohesion Policy
 - Academy Complaints Procedure
 - Performance Management Policies for Teaching and Support Staff
 - Pay Policy
 - Lettings Policy
 - Discipline, Capability and Grievance Procedures
 - Sex and Relationships Education
- 5.3 The Equality Policy is published on the school website and referred to in the school prospectus. It will be revised annually. An action plan is published on the school website.