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GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL

EQUALITY INFORMATION POLICY

Approved by Governing Body: **FGB**
Minute Reference: **2023/24/FGB/76**
Staff Sponsor: **JSR**
Date of next review: **Autumn 2025**
Added to shared drive: **Yes**
Placed on website: **Yes**

Great Torrington School Mission Statement

Great Torrington School is an inclusive school where our pupils have high aspirations for themselves and each other. We are creating a place of learning for each pupil in our care and nothing will stand in the way of this entitlement. All our pupils have the right to grow into well-informed, confident individuals who are able to demonstrate independent learning and responsibility in their attitudes towards one another.

Great Torrington School will promote equality of access for all those involved in the educational process. The school is in a mixed area and attracts pupils with wide ranging learning, social, economic and ethnic differences. The school strives to identify, prevent and redress unfair discrimination against groups who may be disadvantaged. Great Torrington School seeks to create a community in which everyone, without exception, is respected, valued and happy.

This policy is intended to assist us in putting this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not unwittingly commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free from harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

Part One: Aims

This policy reflects our aims that learners will:

- achieve or surpass their educational attainment on public examinations based on predictions based on prior educational achievement;
- show respect in valuing themselves and recognising the values of others;
- uphold the values of the local, national and international community;
- be able to challenge injustice and possess the compassion, courage and understanding to do so fairly;
- be provided with appropriate interventions and enhancement programmes to allow all to have a broad and positive educational experience and to take advantage of the changing nature of progression and work.

We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents / carers, governors and members of the wider community. Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school's ethos and values, in particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy.

We expect all our staff to act in a non-discriminating manner and be mindful to avoid actions that will be deemed as harassment in the services we provide to the public and our wider community. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The

duty to make reasonable adjustments may include the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if these physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, at Great Torrington School as service providers of children and young people, we have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from having access to services we provide.

Equal opportunity issues link with other Great Torrington School policies:

- ***GTS Safeguarding***
- ***Recruitment and Selection Policy***
- ***Accessibility Action Plan (Appendix to this policy)***
- ***Equality Objectives (Appendix to this policy) including the diversity statement***
- ***GTS Behaviour Policy (and associated Appendices)***
- ***Staff behaviour (Code of conduct for staff)***
- ***GTS SEN Policy***
- ***GTS Medical Policy***
- ***GTS Curriculum Statement***
- ***Careers Guidance and access for education and training providers***
- ***Sex and Relationships Education Policy***
- ***PDPM and professional development and appraisal policy***
- ***Policy for the Education of Looked after children***
- ***All policies connected to maternity/paternity leave and adoption***
- ***Exams policy (and associated Appendices)***
- ***Complaints Procedure***
- ***Managing unreasonable behaviour (adults) policy***
- ***Capability Policy***
- ***Pay policy***
- ***Redundancy Policy***
- ***Freedom of information policy (and associated Appendices)***
- ***Admissions Policy***

Part Two: The legal requirements

The main reason for adopting an equality Information policy is to identify, prevent and redress unfair discrimination against disadvantaged groups. The equal opportunities policy will assist the governing body to address legal, managerial, and social issues from the basis of a statement of commitment to equality supported by a more detailed policy and procedures for implementation.

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The general thrust of *The Equality Act 2010* is to make discrimination 'prohibited conduct' on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation unlawful. Discrimination under *The Equality Act 2010* can be direct or indirect and the Act also prohibits harassment and victimisation. But the ways in which discrimination, harassment and victimisation might become illegal depend quite often on the type of protected characteristic – for example, on gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It should also be noted that victimising a pupil who has a protected characteristics or their parents or siblings is also

regarded as unlawful. Good practice should ensure that teaching and support staff are constantly able to evaluate what they do and to receive appropriate support and training in this area. The school must not discriminate against a child applying to be admitted to the school or to existing pupils on the grounds of their protected characteristic

The Equality Act 2010 combines the various former Acts such as:

Sex discrimination

Under *The Equality Act 2010*, direct sex discrimination means that pupils cannot be treated less favourably according to their gender.

Gender reassignment discrimination

The Equality 2010 Act reminds us that gender reassignment is a process and not an event. Discrimination in connection with the provision of education on grounds of past, present or proposed gender reassignment is in the main unlawful.

Sexual orientation discrimination

Discrimination in connection with the provision of education on grounds of sexual orientation is ordinarily unlawful under the provisions of The Equality Act 2010.

Race discrimination

Race as defined in *The Equality Act 2010* includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.
Race is essentially a group characteristic, but one racial group can be part of a larger racial group.
Discrimination in connection with provision of education on grounds of race is generally unlawful under the Act. Schools have a statutory general duty to promote race equality and eliminate unlawful racial discrimination. See race equality policy.

Religion or belief discrimination

In *The Equality Act 2010*, religion means any religion and reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion. Similarly, belief means any religious or philosophical belief and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief.

Disability discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 states that schools must make reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities and a more specific requirement for pupils with special educational needs.

Accessibility for disabled pupils

Schools are expected to improve the ways in which disabled pupils can access the school's curriculum. There must be a written accessibility plan which should be implemented within a reasonable time. See school admissions, school inclusion and school exclusion policies. From 2012 the school will publish an annual report about the arrangements for disabled pupils.

Types of discrimination

Direct discrimination is always unlawful. It occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others in the same circumstances because of their sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or on racial grounds. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant. In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination can occur when a condition or requirement is applied equally but is such that the proportion of members of one sex, racial group etc who can meet it is considerably smaller than the proportion of members of the other sex or other racial groups. Indirect discrimination is unlawful unless the person imposing the condition can show that it is justified, irrespective of the sex or race of the person to whom it is applied.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Sexual Harassment is **unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature** which: violates your dignity. makes you feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated. creates a hostile or offensive environment

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they do not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic by third parties such as staff, pupils, governors, parents, educational advisors. For an employer to be liable the harassment must have occurred on at least two previous occasions (although not necessarily by the same harasser or suffering the same type of harassment); they must be aware that the previous harassment has taken place; and the employer has failed to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment from happening again.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under *The Equality Act 2010*, or because they are suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to compare their treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under *The Equality Act 2010*. For example, if a blind employee raises a grievance that the employer is not complying with its duty to make reasonable adjustments and is then systematically excluded from all meetings; such behaviour could amount to victimisation.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Part 3: Implementation of Equal Opportunities at Great Torrington School

THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM MUST:

- carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation (including The Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Employment Equality Regulations);
- endeavour to assess candidates objectively for employment and promotion against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary;

- comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations and will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability;
- reinforce the school's position as a provider of high quality education and as a good employer providing development opportunities;
- ensure that equality remains high on the school's strategic agenda;
- establish good people management practices in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organisational response;
- work towards a staffing and governing body that reflects the composition of the wider community;
- ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil;
- ensure that pupils and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals;
- enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status;
- provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including those who work part-time, on the basis of their assessed training needs;
- promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils can make;
- ensure that employees are equipped with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions, to recognise discriminatory practices and behaviour and to generally promote anti-discriminatory behaviour;
- ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's equal opportunities policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (e.g. complaints relating to staff may be investigated either under the disciplinary, grievance or anti-harassment procedure as appropriate).
- Adhere to the SEN Code of Practice 2014 which governs procedures for children with Education, Health and Care Plans or Statements of Educational Need.

ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADERS AND HEADS OF LEARNING

The senior leadership team of the school are accountable for the school curriculum and line management of raising standards leaders and subject leaders. The Subject Leaders and Heads of Learning are responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place to monitor the performance of potentially disadvantaged learners. Measures in place include:

- identifying and investigating any patterns with regard to exclusions and poor attendance / punctuality in respect of particular groups;
- monitoring differences in learner attitudes to work (particularly of those with protected characteristics) and towards each other with a view to identifying any significant patterns and issues;
- addressing issues such as sexual or racial harassment, bullying and hostile behaviour and ensuring that there are effective procedures for reporting and responding to such incidents;
- ensuring that the performance of different groups of learners is monitored and evaluated so that the particular needs of different learners are met and evaluating the impact of additional support on achieving standards.
- Adhere to the SEN Code of Practice 2014 which governs procedures for children with Education, Health Care Plans.

Role of Subject Leader

- to provide strategies to implement a rise in performance, aspirations and self-esteem of potentially disadvantaged learners;
- to provide staff development to raise awareness of differences in need and to promote strategies to raise achievement in all learners;
- to provide an environment that creates, affirms, and supports ethnic, cultural, religious, and social diversity and effectively promotes good personal, community and race relations.
- Adhere to the SEN Code of Practice 2014 which governs procedures for children with Education, Health Care Plans. Every reasonable effort and adjustment is made to provide a learning environment in which all pupils have equal access to facilities and resources
- A range of teaching methods is used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place for all pupils.

Expectations of all staff

- staff share a responsibility to challenge a learner, parent/carer or colleague who behaves in a discriminatory way and encourage them to exhibit more appropriate attitudes or behaviour
- anti-discriminatory practice involves the examination of our personal values, beliefs, attitudes, and expectations to ensure that we work proactively to give equality of opportunity to all learners, parents/carers, and colleagues at all times.
- staff should provide extra-curricular activities and events that cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.
- for staff to work in an anti-discriminatory way we need to have knowledge of relevant equal opportunities legislation and what this means for our practices and school polices.
- parents / carers of pupils have a right to a genuine commitment by the school to concepts and practices that underpin equal rights legislation and policies and the avoidance of tokenistic behaviour.
- the promotion of equality of opportunity involves respect for all people and valuing their individuality and personal circumstances. It also involves encouraging and fostering a positive learning environment.
- to provide a broad and balanced KS3 and KS4 curriculum that is designed to meet the diverse needs of pupils in curriculum design, subject options, and pedagogy so that every learner can succeed.
- all staff will ensure that curriculum resources reflect and celebrate diversity.
- the pastoral care implications require monitoring and supporting the progress and development of all learners irrespective of prior learning attainment and background. Staff are vigilant towards those from minority groups or with disabilities, medical conditions, or other special educational needs. In specific circumstances, making special arrangements for pupils with protected characteristics is appropriate.
- staff who commit serious acts of harassment may also be guilty of a criminal offence. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or parents and their families are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.
- Adhere to the SEN Code of Practice 2014 which governs procedures for children with Education, Health Care Plans. Adults in the school will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity
- The school places high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We also aim to meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered, innovative programmes of study.
- All pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning

Grievances
See ***Capability, Conduct & Grievance Policies***
See ***School Complaints Policy***

EXPECTATIONS FOR PUPILS AT GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL

Disability:

- the School will make whatever arrangements are reasonable and practical within their financial constraints to ensure that disabled learners can gain access to the curriculum.
- the School will work effectively with local services and agencies to provide integrated support.

Gender:

- curriculum materials and pedagogy reasonably reflect a gender balance and extend aspirations and opportunities.
- guidance is given on subject choices and careers to encourage learners to consider non-stereotypical opportunities.
- gender issues are considered when preparing for, and following up, work experience and other work related learning
- and take account of positive role models such as staff, guest speakers and representatives in the promotion of specific gender initiatives.

Ethnic, indigenous, refugees, religious or any other group who may be considered as a minority within our school community have:

- effective induction arrangements;
- effective home-school liaison links made to strengthen our partnership with our parents / carers directly in their child's education;
- cultural and linguistic diversity recognised and celebrated;
- essential information translated into a community language when possible or necessary;
- links established with local communities and their leaders;
- effective interventions for ethnic minority and pupils who are early stage English as an Additional (EAL) language learners;
- for pupils from traveller communities, appropriate support to enable them to achieve their best;
- a programme of spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education with appropriate information and resources; and
- pupils' names accurately recorded and as far as possible pronounced correctly. We expect pupils to respect the names from cultures or socio-economic groups other than their own

Low income:

- an environment where pupils can all feel at home and treated with dignity and available learning resources such as learning guides and on-line materials
- Provision of a loan laptop/tablet and 4G hub to enable home learning
- access to a balanced free school meal at lunchtime
- full admittance to extension and core extra-curriculum activities independent of cost
- raise low aspirations in order to encourage social mobility

Sexual orientation and reassignment, the school will:

- ensure no-one within the school or using its services experiences discrimination or harassment;
- ensure staff have received training on equality issues concerning sexual orientation;
- broaden representation in school to reflect society;
- ensure services consider difference and diversity are accessible to all who need them.
- A Pupils preferred pronouns and first name is used when they are addressed by staff
- The school has provided gender neutral toilets.

ADMISSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent; they do not discriminate by race, gender, disability, or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions are always handled according to the school's Behaviour Policy. We make reasonable, appropriate, and flexible adjustments for pupils with a disability. Any exclusions are monitored very carefully to avoid any potential adverse impact and to ensure that discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

Part 4: Monitoring and Quality Assurance

Each pupil's progress is tracked to monitor gaps in attainment and participation. The resulting data is analysed in respect of disability and special educational needs; gender; where prior attainment may be different from national norms (eg classified as 'not secondary ready' or academically more able); minority ethnic and pupils who use English as an additional language; pupils of different sexual orientation or family grouping; for pupils who are looked after or young carers; and pupils who live in low socio-economic households.

Consultation

The development of the Accessibility Action Plan (policy 7A) and the actual actions (policy 7B) within it, are informed in several ways, including:

- Issues raised at Annual Review of EHC Plan transition meetings, meetings to initiate or review the Devon Assessment Framework (DAF) process, mentoring and support from the Advisory Teacher Service.
- Feedback from parents' evenings, parent forum meetings
- Input through staff meetings or INSET
- Input from pupil surveys and pupil voice
- Feedback from those involved in accessing our school site i.e. community groups or visitors.

Review of Progress and Impact

This Equality Information Policy has been agreed by the governing body.

Information about equalities in the policy will be reviewed annually and adjustments made as appropriate.

Publishing the Equality Information Policy, Accessibility Action Plan and Equality Objectives.

This Equality Information Policy, along with the Accessibility Action Plan and Equality Objectives, will be published on the school website. It will also form part of the induction process for all newly-appointed staff.