DOWNLANDS
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Approved by:	Full Governing Board	**Date:** 16 September 2026
Policy last reviewed by: **On:**	S Adams September 2026	
Next Policy review:	September 2027 (for FGB approval)	

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Policy Statement on Behaviour at Work for all School Based Staff

At Downlands Community School we work hard to eliminate direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between all those within our school community. We do this with regard to the nine protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010. These characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

A glossary which defines these terms and additional terms related to equality, diversity and inclusion can be found in Appendix 1.

Our duties under the Equality Act also reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires us to promote community cohesion and at Downlands Community School we work 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.

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is reflected in our school policies and procedures, especially those related to (but not limited to):

- accessibility
- behaviour
- anti-bullying
- uniform
- recruitment
- RSHE
- Special Educational Needs

Our school ethos and values

At Downlands we place learning at the heart of everything we do. We believe that as a school that we are all leaders who are committed to building and maintaining an inclusive community in which all members feel welcome. We strive to develop through our academic, pastoral and wider curriculum students who are kind and successful learners.

Our school profile

Downlands is a mixed comprehensive school in a semi-rural setting close to Brighton. The school has approximately 1200 students on roll. This school percentage of free school meals students is below average and represents about 7% of the school population. The number of SEND support students is above average with the number of students EHC plans below average. The ethnicity of the school is predominantly White -British who at 86% represent the most significant group. This school has 13 out of 17 possible ethnic groups however, none of these groups are more than 5% of the population. The number of EAL students is also well below average.

Fulfilling our public sector equality duty

How we eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation:

Downlands does not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation of anyone within our school community, and we are opposed to all forms of prejudice.

- The school has robust procedures for dealing with prejudice-related incidents and all staff receive training on these. All incidents are recorded, and this data is shared with the governing board and analysed so that any trends can be identified, and action plans put in place.
- The *Staff Grievance Policy* outline the procedures for reporting and responding to incidents of discrimination, harassment and victimisation experienced by staff
- The *Complaints Procedure* outlines the procedures for reporting and responding to incidents of discrimination, harassment and victimisation experienced by parents and carers and the wider school community.

How we advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it:

Treating people equally does not mean treating them all the same. We recognise that people have different needs, different experiences, different outlooks and face different barriers to achieving positive outcomes.

- We collect and monitor data broken down by different protected characteristics in order to identify inequalities and disparities within our student population in terms of:
    - Progress and attainment
    - Admissions
    - Attendance
    - Rewards, sanctions and exclusions

and within our staff population in terms of:

- Recruitment, retention, training and promotion
- Capability, disciplinary and complaints

We employ appropriate interventions where necessary in order to address disparities. Please see our Equalities Objectives and Action Plan for further details.

- We consult widely with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- We assess all of our policies and procedures to ensure that no individuals or groups are disadvantaged and to identify opportunities for positive action.
- We make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment and its activities are as accessible and as welcoming as possible to all, in some cases treating disabled people more favourably than non-disabled people where necessary. Please see our Accessibility Plan for further information.
- We ensure that students' work is adapted so that the curriculum is accessible to all students.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of staff and students and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We take all reasonable steps to ensure the wellbeing and inclusion of transgender staff and students, including those who transition during their time at the school.

How we foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it:

- We ensure that our curriculum offers opportunities to learn about people with a diverse range of identities.
- We teach our students to recognise and challenge stereotypes and prejudice and to value difference.
- We ensure that our resources challenge stereotypes and reflect the diversity of society.
- We take positive action to ensure that people with a range of different identities engage with our school community for example guest speakers, arts groups, school governors, parent/carer helpers etc.
- Our behaviour policy includes a requirement to respect other people and their different identities.
- We take steps to ensure diversity in our student council, governing board and staff team.
- We celebrate diversity at every opportunity and hold regular assemblies and events celebrating diversity throughout the year.

Responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.
- A member of the governing board has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.
- The school and governors carry out equalities impact assessments on internally written policies to ensure that protected groups are not disadvantaged or adversely affected.
- All available data is used to consider equalities issues and to ensure adjustments to school policies and practices are made, including positive action where necessary.

The head teacher and senior management are responsible for:

- Overseeing the implementation of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support.
- Taking appropriate action in any cases of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying.
- Regularly reviewing data related to prejudice-related incidents and taking necessary steps to reduce occurrences of incidents within the school.

All staff are responsible for:

- Refraining from engaging in behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.
- Understanding and complying with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Contributing to the action plan attached to the policy.
- Making reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled students do not experience discrimination or exclusion.
- Reporting prejudice-related incidents, following the school's procedure.
- Attending training sessions as necessary to carry out this policy and keep up to date with equalities legislation.

Commented [SA1]: This are policies which are not based on West Sussex model policies

Commented [SA2]: This fits better with KCSIE which states that all staff should report prejudicial incidents

- Challenging bias and stereotyping.
- Promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos.

All parents/carers are responsible for:

- Refraining from engaging in behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.
- Understanding the ethos of the school and complying with the school's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Ensuring that they and the young people that they are responsible for meet the expectations set out in the home-school agreement.

All visitors are responsible for:

- Refraining from engaging in behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying in their engagement with the school.
- Complying with the school's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

All students are responsible for:

- Refraining from engaging in behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.
- Understanding the ethos of the school and complying with the school's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Reporting prejudice-related incidents;
- Understanding, valuing and celebrating diversity.
- Challenging stereotypes and prejudices.

Equality Objectives and Action Plan

In order to fulfil its Public Sector Equality Duty the school collects equality information on pupils and staff.

Using this information, the school analyses the following in terms of protected characteristics:

- Student admissions
- Student attendance

- Student performance/achievement
- Student sanctions
- Student rewards
- Staff recruitment, retention and promotion
- Staff disciplinary and capability proceedings
- Records of prejudice-related incidents
- Complaints by parents and carers

The school also conducts surveys with staff, pupils and parents and carers to identify areas that they feel the school is doing well and areas for improvement.

This information is used to identify any discrepancies between people from different groups and to identify equality objectives.

Our equality objectives may also take into account national and local priorities and issues as appropriate. They are devised in consultation with school governors and are integrated into the school improvement plan. We keep the objectives under review and report annually on our progress towards achieving them.

The school identifies any equality training needs within our staff through a staff survey and learning walks. These needs will be addressed, and this may also inform our Equality Objectives.

Equality Impact Assessments

Internally produced school policies are regularly assessed for their impact on different groups of people with shared protected characteristics. This ensures that our policies, practices and decision-making processes are fair and do not discriminate against any particular groups. It also enables us to consider ways to proactively advance equality.

Breaches of this policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing board.

Appendix 1: Glossary

Antisemitism	A certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.
Biphobia	Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about bisexual people.
Cisgender	Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.
Disability	A physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out typical day-to-day activities.
Discrimination	This can be direct: When someone is treated less favourably than another person or other people because: they have a particular protected characteristic someone thinks they have that protected characteristic (discrimination by perception) they are connected to someone with that protected characteristic (discrimination by association) Or indirect: There is a policy that applies in the same way for everybody but disadvantages a group of people who share a protected characteristic.
Gender identity	Someone's internal sense of their own gender, whether man, woman or some other gender. This may or may not align with their assigned sex.
Gender reassignment	If someone is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) to change sex and/or gender. This might involve medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender.

Harassment	Unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which violates a person's dignity and/or which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.
Homophobia	Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about lesbian, or gay people.
Islamophobia	A type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness. Further information here.
Prejudice-related incident	Any incident which is perceived to be prejudice-related by the victim or any other person.
Race and ethnicity	Includes skin colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.
Racism	Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about someone based on their skin colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.
Reasonable adjustments	Taking reasonable steps to remove disadvantages faced by disabled people by: changing provisions, criteria or practices changing or removing a physical feature or providing a reasonable alternative way to avoid that feature providing auxiliary aids
Religion or belief	Religion is a formalised system of belief that aims to relate humanity to spirituality. Beliefs included are philosophical beliefs, which are considered to be similar to a religion. We include people who have no religion or a lack of belief.

Sex	Whether someone is male, female or intersex.
Sexism	Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about someone based on their sex.
Sexual orientation	Who someone is emotionally, mentally, and physically attracted to in relation to their sex/gender, this includes heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual and asexual.
Transgender	An umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.
Transphobia	Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about transgender people including refusal to accept their gender identity
Victimisation	Treating someone badly because they are: making a claim or complaint of discrimination helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information Or because they intend to do so.

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

People responsible for overseeing the EIA:

Name of the policy, procedure or project:

What is the main purpose or aims of the policy, procedure or project?

Who will be the beneficiaries of the policy, procedure or project?

Have you consulted on this policy, procedure or project?

Complete the following table and give reasons/comments for where:

1. The policy, procedure or project could have a positive impact on any person or group because of one of the following aspects of their identity.
2. The policy, procedure or project could have a negative impact, or disadvantage, a person or group because of one of the following aspects of their identity.

(At this stage it is important to consider the requirements placed upon a school as per the Equality Act 2010.)

Groups	Positive Impact		Negative Impact		Comments
	High	Low	High	Low	

Race					
Religion or Belief					
Sexual Orientation					
Sex					
Disability					
Age					
Gender Reassignment					
Pregnancy and Maternity					
Marriage and Civil Partnership					

Where there is negative impact, what actions could be taken to amend the policy, procedure or project to minimise the negative impact?

If there is no evidence that the policy, procedure or project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improves relations between people with different protected characteristics, what amendments could be made to achieve this?

How will the policy, procedure or project be implemented including any necessary training?

Date of Completion: Click or tap to enter a date.