



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT POLICY

Darwen Vale High School

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Our Responsibility

All aspects of our Academy life will be based on the foundation of inclusion, equality and diversity. The Equality Act came into force on 1st October 2010 and is in place to ensure fairness and that equality legislation is clearer and stronger. The Equality Act replaces nine pieces of complex discrimination law under one umbrella and emphasises under protected characteristics nine potential elements for discrimination as follows:

- Age
- Discrimination
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

All of our Academy Policies should avoid negative or adverse impacts of services on the nine 'protected characteristics'. This policy should be read in conjunction with all other policies within School in order that equality is integral to each individual Policy's development and review.

The DVHS Ethos

DVHS has developed a culture of social inclusion in which all students and staff are valued equally, irrespective of their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, beliefs or disability. We actively reduce barriers to learning and seek to promote participation for all, responding to and embracing the diversity of our students and our local community.

We believe that cultural and social differences are an important learning resource that supports learning and social development and helps all students to feel that they are valued and important members of our School. This prepares our students for a life in a diverse society. We believe that the curriculum within DVHS accurately reflects the cultural diversity of our society as a whole so that students' progress with an appreciation of the contribution made by other cultures, even if they have not directly encountered them within the Academy.

This Policy will apply to all areas of Academy activities whether curricular, assemblies, sporting, extra-curricular or work placements. DVHS offers a wide range of enrichment activities. Our aim is for students and families to have opportunities to build successful relationships with others from all aspects of the local, wider and global community through a variety of visits and activities.

All documentation, communication and publicity will be designed to be non-discriminatory and will emphasise equality and the value of diversity. Our aim is that all groups will be equally represented.

Access to all areas and facilities will be provided for all staff and students in as far as this is possible within the resources available. Seating arrangements in classrooms will be such as to allow all students equal access to equipment, teachers, support and resources.

Discrimination in any form will not be tolerated by staff or students. All staff should ensure that unfair situations are recognised and dealt with including the following types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination – where employees/applicants are treated less favourably because they are subject to the nine protected characteristics.
- Indirect discrimination – in which selection criteria, employment rules or the curriculum structure put individuals at a disadvantage of participating fully in Academy life.
- Harassment – behaviour that is offensive, frightening or distressing in any way.
- Victimisation – when an individual is treated discriminately because s/he has made a complaint, intends to make a complaint about discrimination or harassment or has given evidence or intends to give evidence, relating to a complaint about discrimination or harassment.

School Practice

- All staff will abide by and play an active role in the development and implementation of DVHS Policies. Consultation will be sought in the development of policies from both staff and students.
- Staff will plan the curriculum to ensure that all students have equal access and that the needs of individual learners are considered and do not disadvantage any member of the DVHS community. Methods of teaching and learning will discourage prejudice and enhance the value of diversity.
- Staff will present positive role models for all groups of students and will explore issues within the curriculum relating to discrimination and prejudice. Staff will at all times avoid language that is discriminatory or patronising.
- DVHS follows a curriculum which includes Religious Studies and PSHEE/SMSC which ensures the promotion of positive attitudes towards diversity.
- Our students will be given the opportunity to experience a variety of teaching and learning strategies which will allow them to explore concepts relating to cultural identity.
- We constantly monitor and evaluate the progress and achievement of all students and have high expectations to ensure that each individual achieves their full potential.
- We will ensure that all students, whatever their gender, ethnicity or special educational needs will receive an education that is appropriate to their needs.
- Staff will ensure that students are aware of their rights and responsibilities with respect to equality, both within DVHS and in the wider community.
- DVHS will seek to develop effective links with all communities and parents.
- We will deal effectively and proactively with regard to incidents of harassment or discrimination in or outside the classroom. Staff will ensure that they are approachable to concerned students and give appropriate support to students who feel that they are affected by discrimination.
- We will ensure that students are aware of to whom to make a complaint and where they can get help.

Pastoral Care and Behaviour

We maintain a proactive and supportive pastoral system which supports each individual student and reflects individual needs and requirements. We ensure that students feel safe within DVHS and if they have any concerns, that they know who to approach in order that their issues are addressed appropriately. Additionally, students can access the PATH Centre, iClass or POD where students can communicate to staff in regards to bullying or any level of additional support which they would like to discuss. We are completely opposed to all expressions or acts of a racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory nature. We will deal with all such incidents according to the agreed procedures for dealing with bullying or poor behaviour or within the Complaints Policy.

Our students have the right:

- Not to be discriminated against.
- To make a complaint if they feel that they are suffering discrimination.
- To have their complaint sympathetically listened to and dealt with.
- Not to be victimised if they do complain.

Our students have the responsibility:

- Not to discriminate against others, or to support the discrimination of others.
- To support other people who may be discriminated against and seek help.
- To report to a responsible person if they feel that discrimination is taking place.
- Not to victimise anyone who makes a complaint of discrimination.

This policy and statement will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it meets changes to legislation and the needs of the Academy, staff and students.

We believe that by the application of secure anti-discriminatory measures we can help to remove ignorance and misunderstanding via the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. All DVHS activities value the diverse composition of both our school community and the wider society.

Schools' Equality Statement

1. The Legislative Framework

The School will ensure that it meets all its responsibilities and liabilities under legislation designed to promote equality and diversity, namely the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act and covers nine equality strands. These are known as 'protected characteristics' specifically age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. The Act provides a new cross-cutting legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all, to update, simplify and strengthen the previous legislation and to deliver a simple, modern and accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal workforce.

2. The Equality Duty

One of the key measures in the Act is the public sector Equality Duty which aims to ensure all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all. This includes:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

3. Equality Statement

The commitment of the School is to promote equality of opportunity to all employees and consider that equality issues must influence decisions, for example:

- to set an example of good practice through innovative solutions to local equality and diversity issues;
- to recognise and promote the value of diversity in the workforce to implement fair and equal employment practices;
- to continually monitor and evaluate the equality analysis and impact of the service we provide in response to our customer needs;
- to inform decision-making through good knowledge of the local population and cultural context.

We will demonstrate our commitment to equality through:

- schools' policy framework which supports this statement and which have been put in place to remove barriers, eliminate discrimination and address disadvantage;

- use of 'positive action' where those with a protected characteristic could experience a disadvantage because of that characteristic or are disproportionately under-represented in a particular activity;
- monitoring and reviewing our policies on a regular basis to ensure they do not discriminate or disadvantage employees;
- monitoring selection of policies will be considered and tested annually by the Policy Development Group to ensure the policies are in place to treat people fairly and proportionally and meet the requirements of the Schools' equality statement;
- undertaking equality training to ensure employees understand what equality law means for them and the organisation and to embed this into practice;
- undertaking workforce monitoring to ensure those with protected characteristics are not being discriminated against;
- conducting equality analysis and impact assessments to help eliminate/mitigate negative impacts and promote equality of opportunity for all.

4. Monitoring and Review

Policies will be reviewed in accordance with any changes to statutory legislation and in consultation with the recognised trade unions.