



SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY

1. Introduction to the Policy

The Single Equality Policy outlines the commitment of the staff and governors of Marling School to building an inclusive community by ensuring that equality of opportunity is available to all. Additionally, the School wants to ensure that practice, procedures and, most importantly, the ethos of the School reflect a community which is free from discrimination, valuing all members of the School community equally and fairly.

As a School we value everyone equally and treat all staff, learners and visitors with respect and dignity within a safe positive working and learning environment free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. We are committed to providing high quality education in a welcoming and supportive environment enabling everyone regardless of their race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender or marital status to reach their potential. We also seek to ensure that we include the additional protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010, namely maternity and pregnancy, marriage and civil partnership and gender reassignment, in all areas of our work to achieve equality and fairness. The School is aware of the socio-economic duty created by the Equality Act 2010 and although this is not a direct requirement we believe that as a school we must ensure that deprivation is not a factor which will affect recruitment, retention, achievement, or success.

The School has chosen an integrated approach to Equality and Diversity for several reasons:

- To reflect the equality duty of the Equality Act 2010.
- To facilitate the identification of our equality priorities.
- To improve the understanding of staff, learners and visitors of their rights and responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity.
- To improve social cohesion by seeking to find similarities rather than focussing on difference.
- To include the new concept of dual discrimination [Equality Act 2010].

By bringing all of the protected characteristics together within one policy the school strives to ensure that excellence permeates all sectors of the School, regardless of diversity and difference.

2. Promoting Equality through Teaching and Learning

The Curriculum

We aim to design and deliver a curriculum to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed. To achieve this, we will do the following:

- Ensure equality of access for all students by taking into account their different needs and barriers to learning.
- Ensure curriculum planning and design is inclusive of people of different ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, genders and people with disabilities.
- Use classroom materials that reflect people of different ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, gender identities and people with disabilities, without stereotyping.
- Not include any materials that express explicit or implicit prejudice.
- Ensure that the curriculum covers issues of equalities, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion.
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own identity, culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that involve all student groupings.
- Develop students' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour and prepare students for life in a diverse society.

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all students regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. All students are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents/carers are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

- Adults in the School will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- Teachers and School staff will challenge and sanction intolerant and prejudice-related behaviour in the classroom and wider school environment.
- The School places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We aim to meet all students' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work.
- The School provides an environment in which all students have equal access to facilities and resources.

Ethos and Atmosphere

- At the School, we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the School community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the School community.
- There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the School.
- The students are encouraged to greet visitors to the School with friendliness and respect.
- The displays around the School are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored.

Language

We recognise that it is important that all members of the School community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes.
- Does not cause offence or upset to anyone on the basis of protected characteristics
- Creates and enhances positive images of the groups of people identified at the beginning of the document.
- Is sensitive to the use of preferred language in relation to particular groups or individuals..

Personal Development

- Equality, diversity and inclusion is prioritised in the PSHE curriculum across the school, including in the tutor and assembly programme.
- Positive role models, including student leaders, are used throughout the School to ensure that different groups of students can see themselves reflected in the school community.
- Student societies representing different student groups are encouraged and facilitated, including the development of alliances across those groups.
- All students are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender or race.
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the School community rather than the challenges.
- We recognise that it takes work to create an inclusive community and this is a School priority for us.

Extra-Curricular Provision

It is the policy of the School to provide equal access to all activities.

We undertake responsibility for making contributors to extra-curricular activities aware of the School's commitment to equality of opportunity by providing them with written guidelines drawn from this policy.

Provision for EAL/Bilingual Students

We undertake at the School to make appropriate provision for all EAL/bilingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Students for whom English is an additional language.
- Students who are new to the United Kingdom.

3. Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of this School to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour e.g

- Unwanted attentions (verbal or physical).
- Unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender).
- The School has a clear, agreed procedure for reporting and dealing with incidents such as these. All students/staff/parents/carers are given support as appropriate when they experience discrimination
- We also recognise that the perpetrators of discrimination are themselves sometimes victims of their personal circumstances and therefore, where appropriate, remedial work is done to ensure that the actions do not occur again.

4. Procurement

Procurement is the process of acquiring goods, works and services, covering both acquisitions from third parties and from in-house providers.

- The School will proactively consider the equality requirements of every contract they tender if it is relevant and proportionate and will consider including equality-related award criteria or contract conditions.
- All contractors will be advised of the School's Single Equality Policy.

5. Staffing and Staff Development

- We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.
- We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.
- We will provide staff with regular training and development in equality, diversity and inclusion.
- We will ensure that practices in School comply with both the Health Standards Regulations and Section 60 of the Equality Act 2010.

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

The School aims to ensure that:

- All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process, including analysis of equalities data.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions.
- All supply staff are made aware of equalities policies and practices.
- It is unlawful for employers to ask health-related questions of applicants before a job offer, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work. This means that we do not, as a matter of course, require job applicants to complete a generic health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

6. Policies and Procedures

- **Where policies or procedures are being created or updated, an Equalities Impact checklist will be completed to determine whether an Equalities Impact Assessment is required.**

7. Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to help all students to achieve their potential.

We wish to affirm our continuing commitment to reach out to all diverse groups within our immediate community and beyond.

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the School.
- As part of the School's commitment to equality and diversity, we will ask members of the School community, including students, staff, local community members, parents/carers, local faith groups and local disability groups to support the School with matters related to its equalities duties.

8. Responsibility for the Policy

In our School, all members of the School community have a responsibility towards supporting the equality agenda. Responsibilities are laid out as follows:

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that:

- The School complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the School community.
- The School's Equality policy is maintained and updated regularly.
- Procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented.
- They have an overview of all racist incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to all said incidents.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Along with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality.
- Overseeing the implementation of the Equality Policy.
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact.
- Ensuring that all who enter the School are aware of, and comply with, the Equality Policy.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support.
- Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability, sexual harassment and discrimination.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping.
- Not discriminating on the grounds of any protected characteristics.
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the School or Local Authority or recognised training provider.

We ensure that the commitments embodied in our policy statement for equality permeate the full range of our policies and practices:

9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) the School will publish Equality Objectives annually
- The School will include Equality Actions in the School Development Plan
- The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the School.

10. Complaints

The School's Complaints policy outlines that the School encourages users to make suggestions to help improve its service and recognises the right to complain. The School is committed to responding to suggestions and complaints positively, efficiently, confidentially and courteously. Although the procedures are mainly for parents/carers and students, anyone with a relevant interest can respond.

The School will accept compliments, comments or complaints in any format. The School, where possible, captures the gender, age, ethnicity and disability status of all complainants. This information is recorded

anonymously in the complaints register and analysed at the end of each year. The analysis is reviewed by the SLT and the Governors and action taken if particular groups, especially if they have protected characteristics, are disproportionately affected.

Appendix A - Definitions

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a person treats one person less favourably than they would another because of a protected characteristic. The new definition of direct discrimination extends protection based on association and perception.

Direct discrimination can occur if, for example:

A School tutor refuses to let a student go on a residential trip because they are a wheelchair-user.

Discrimination based on association can occur if, for example:

An employee is overlooked for promotion because their partner has undergone gender reassignment.

Discrimination based on perception can occur if, for example:

An employer decides not to promote a female employee because a senior member of staff believes her to be pregnant irrespective of whether she is pregnant or not.

Dual Discrimination

Dual discrimination protects people who experience direct discrimination because of a combination of two protected characteristics (marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity are not included in these provisions).

Discrimination based on dual discrimination can occur if, for example a person was from a BME (Black, Minority Ethnic) group and also had a disability.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is neutral on the face of it, but its impact particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic, unless the person applying the provision can justify it as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination may occur if, for example:

An employer who requires staff to commit to working from 8pm to 11pm every evening indirectly discriminates against women, who are more likely to be primary carers of children, unless this can be objectively justified as above.

Harassment

There are three types of harassment:

- Unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the complainant, or violating the complainant's dignity (this applies to all the protected characteristics apart from pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership).
- Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment).
- Treating a person less favourably than another person because they have either submitted to, or did not submit to, sexual harassment or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment.

Harassment may occur if, for example:

A member of staff makes comments on a learner's sexuality in a way that makes the learner feel uncomfortable. The perceptions of the recipient of the harassment are very important and harassment can have been deemed to have occurred even if the intention was not present, but the recipient felt they were being harassed.

Victimisation

Victimisation takes place where one person treats another less favourably because he or she has asserted their legal rights in line with the Equality Act 2010 or helped someone else to do so.

Victimisation may occur if, for example:

A student alleges that they have encountered racism from a teacher and as a result they are ignored by other staff members.

Failure to make adjustments

If a school fails to make reasonable adjustments to enable a disabled person to study successfully at the school this may be illegal. The School must avoid as far as possible by reasonable means the disadvantage which a disabled student experiences because of their disability.

Appendix B - The Equality Act 2010 and protected characteristics

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged are:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Protected characteristics

Age

The Act protects employees of all ages but remains the only protected characteristic that allows employers to justify direct discrimination, i.e. if an employer can demonstrate that to apply different treatment because of someone's age constitutes a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim, then no discrimination will have taken place. The Act continues to allow employers to have a default retirement age of 65, as long as the default retirement age remains.

Disability

A person is a disabled person (someone who has the protected characteristic of disability) if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has what the law calls 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause.

- Conditions that affect the body such as arthritis, hearing or sight impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses), diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, conditions such as HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis, as well as loss of limbs or the use of limbs are covered.
- HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis are covered from the point of diagnosis.
- Severe disfigurement (such as scarring) is covered even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement, provided the long-term requirement is met (see below).
- People who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist, are automatically treated as disabled under the Act.
- Mental impairment includes conditions such as dyslexia and autism as well as learning disabilities such as Down's syndrome and mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia.

The Act includes a new protection arising from disability and now states that it is unfair to treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with a disability. An example provided is the tendency to make spelling mistakes arising from dyslexia. Indirect discrimination now covers a disabled person, which means that a job applicant could claim that a particular rule or requirement disadvantages people with that disability.

Gender reassignment

Gender reassignment is a personal process (rather than a medical process) which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with.

This personal process may include undergoing medical procedures or may simply include choosing to dress in a different way as part of the personal process of change.

It is discriminatory to treat people who propose to start to or have completed a process to change their gender less favourably, for example, because they are absent from work for this reason.

Marriage and Civil partnership

This act protects people who enter a civil partnership and gives equal rights.

Pregnancy and maternity

The Act protects women against discrimination because they are pregnant or have given birth.

It is discrimination to treat a woman (including a female learner of any age) less favourably because she is or has been pregnant, has given birth in the last 26 weeks or is breastfeeding a baby who is 26 weeks or younger.

It is direct sex discrimination to treat a woman (including a female student of any age) less favourably because she is breastfeeding a child who is more than 26 weeks old.

Race

The Act protects people against discrimination on the grounds of their race, which includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. A person has the protected characteristic of race if they belong to a particular racial group, such as 'British people'. Racial groups can comprise two or more racial groups such as 'British Asians'.

Religion or belief

The Act protects people against discrimination on the grounds of their religion or their belief, including a lack of any belief.

Sex

The Act protects both men and women against discrimination on the grounds of their sex.

Sexual orientation

The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people from discrimination on the grounds of their sexual orientation.

Appendix C – Action Plan

Equality and Inclusion Action Plan (Equaliteach Silver Award Audit)

In October 2023 Marling School completed the Equaliteach Silver Award, which is designed for organisations that are building on strong foundations to ensure that equality and diversity practice flows through all aspects of the school. The Award is valid until 25th October 2026.

The Award has been designed by a team of equality and education experts to allow schools to fulfil their statutory duties to:

- Eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations (Equality Act 2010)
- Promote community cohesion (Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015)
- Safeguard children and promote spiritual moral, social and cultural development (Education Act 2002)

The Audit required the School to provide detailed evidence against equalities indicators in the following categories:

- Behaviour and Welfare
- Teaching and Learning
- Personal Development of Pupils
- Leadership and Management

The Action Plan for 2023/24 will consist of continued implementation of the deliverables identified in the Equalities Award Process and of the Equality Objectives.