

**Ysgol Uwchradd Y Frenhines Elisabeth
Queen Elizabeth High School**



Moving Forward Together

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
(Formerly Equality & Diversity Policy)

Full Governing Body

Date established: 28TH September 2022

Responsible Person – Mrs Lisa Jones

Designated role – Deputy Head Teacher

Chair of Governors signature – *Jeremy Griffith*

Date – 29th September 2025

Next review – Autumn Term 2026

Policy Version Control

[illegible]

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Equality Act 2010, all associated legislation and codes of practice underpin the principles of this policy. (Appendix 1)

POLICY

This policy must be read in conjunction with the school's Equality Plan, Inclusion Policy, Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and Accessibility Plan.

It must be applied consistently to all irrespective of race (which includes colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins), disability, religion or belief, age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital status or civil partnership.

QEH is committed to ensuring that all pupils are given opportunities to achieve their potential by taking account of their varied needs and experiences.

SCOPE

This Policy covers all employees, pupils/pupils seeking admission and others using school facilities.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES - WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The principle of equality has been understood to be about 'treating everyone the same' or 'treating everyone as you would wish to be treated'. A more appropriate way of looking at equality is to respond to individuals or groups according to their needs.

To value diversity is to recognise and value the differences between individuals and groups, to encourage their strengths and talents, and understand their needs.

Everyone has a responsibility to embrace and support equality and diversity and to challenge behaviour and attitudes that prevent us from achieving this.

Equal Opportunities at QE High

The following diversity strands are presented in alphabetical order and represent the protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010 plus Welsh language. It outlines everyone's responsibilities and expected behaviours to ensure a positive approach to equality and diversity within our school: (Appendix 2)

- 1. Age**
- 2. Disability**
- 3. Gender re-assignment**
- 4. Marriage and civil partnership**

5. **Pregnancy and maternity**
6. **Race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins)**
7. **Religion and Belief**
8. **Sex**
9. **Sexual Orientation**
10. **Welsh Language**

Appendix 3 outlines the key definitions of different forms of discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

Governing Body and Headteacher

- Ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and all associated employment legislation and codes of practice
- Act with dignity, show respect for others and develop a workplace that is inclusive and confident, free from bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Ensure policy is reviewed and implemented.
- Ensuring those responsible for recruitment and selection, induction, learning and development, performance appraisal, pay, promotion, disciplinary action, selection for retirement and redundancy, dismissal, organisational communication and working practices, understand their role and responsibility in relation to promoting equality and diversity and to avoid discrimination in all its forms
- Ensure that the necessary internal arrangements and resources are in place to enable the organisation to meet its statutory obligations and promote equality and diversity

Senior and Middle Leadership

- Leading by example and improving personal leadership abilities in promoting equality and diversity through participation in relevant management development
- Ensuring the equality and diversity policy is communicated to the team and individuals understand their personal responsibilities
- Challenging inappropriate behaviour in the workplace and promoting positive employee relationships
- Identifying staff training and development needs in relation to equality and diversity

All Staff

- Staff at all levels are personally responsible for ensuring that they support positively the principles of equality and diversity at all times, co-operate by promoting good relations and challenge inappropriate behaviour by following the values set out in this policy
- Any difficulties should be raised with their line manager in the first instance. Staff should consider their development needs in relation to equality and diversity as part of the personal development planning process

Pupils

- Pupils are encouraged to report any incidents of inequality to a relevant member of staff
- Pupils should show care, respect and tolerance towards each other.

Equality in the curriculum

- Every pupil has an equal entitlement to the curriculum and, subject to entry requirements, to all other areas of the curriculum, regardless of language, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity, or gender dysphoria.
- Staff will actively encourage the breaking down of any traditional gender stereotyping regarding subject choices at KS4 and KS5
- Subject based support, guidance and facilities, including extra-curricular activities, will be available to all pupils, with particular attention to the protected characteristics.
- Teachers will review and consider all resources used for teaching and learning and will take appropriate action whenever possible to ensure that they reflect concepts, themes and information which seeks to address stereotypes in relation to the protected characteristics.

Equality in recruitment

The school will ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against based on the Protected Characteristics.

Recruitment and selection procedures and practices are reviewed to ensure that no individual is put at a disadvantage.

Employees are given an equal opportunity to progress within the organisation.

CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

All concerns and complaints in regard to discrimination/inequality will be taken seriously. QEH will investigate fully and fairly. The outcome will be in line with the school's Disciplinary Policy and Behaviour Policy. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they should follow the school's complaint's procedure (See Complaint's Policy).

If an employee has a concern regarding breaches in the application of this policy they are advised to speak to their line manager in the first instance. If the employee's concern relates to his/her line manager, then advice can also be provided by the departmental Human Resource representative or Trade Union representative.

Appendix 1

AN EXTRACT OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010. The purpose of the Equality Act 2010 is to simplify discrimination legislation and create a more consistent and effective framework, while at the same time extending discrimination protection.

The Act defines direct discrimination as less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

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

Indirect discrimination against individuals because they have a relevant protected characteristic is also covered, although pregnancy and maternity does not come under the indirect discrimination provisions in the Equality Act 2010.

Appendix 2

DEFINITIONS

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

This page gives you more information on each of the nine protected characteristics.

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

A man or a woman.

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes

Appendix 3

Definitions

“Direct discrimination” happens when a person is treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances because of a protected characteristic. Direct discrimination is generally unlawful. However, it may be lawful in the following circumstances: • where there is an ‘occupational requirement’ for a job holder to be of a particular age; • where a disabled person is treated more favourably than a nondisabled person; • where the 2010 Act provides an express exception which permits directly discriminatory treatment that would otherwise be unlawful.

Discrimination by association” is a form of direct discrimination that occurs if a school treats a person less favourably because of that person’s association with another person who has a protective characteristic.

“Discrimination by perception” is another form of direct discrimination against a person who is wrongly thought to have a particular relevant characteristic, or is treated as if they do have that characteristic.

“Indirect discrimination” occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all but has the effect, or would have the effect, of placing members of one or more protected groups at a substantial disadvantage as a result. Indirect discrimination is unlawful unless it can be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

“Combined discrimination” takes place when a person is treated less favourably because of a combination of two of the specified relevant characteristics. Those protected characteristics that will be relevant for the purposes of this form of discrimination are age; disability; sex; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; race; and religion or belief.

“Discrimination arising from disability” this occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably not because of the person’s disability but because of something arising from, or in consequence of, the person’s disability such as the need to take a period of disability related absence.

“Victimisation” is the practice of treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination, for example by bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague. Victimisation is also unlawful.

“Harassment” is any unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief, sex; and sexual orientation. Harassment is also unlawful in some of the situations covered by discrimination law.

