



# Griffin Schools Trust Single Equality Policy

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## 1. Policy Overview

This policy reflects the Single Equality Act 2010 which harmonises and replaces previous legislation and therefore supersedes all previous school policies. The Single Equality Act combines the existing three duties into one new Equality Duty that covers all nine of the equality strands: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race and ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership.

Griffin Schools Trust (GST) will ensure as far as possible that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of the Trust community, everyone is treated in line with this guidance. This Single Equality Policy sets out the Trust's approach towards equality for all.

## 2. Vision for Equality

At GST we believe in equality for all. We are committed to ensuring all our employees and those that work with us are equipped with the knowledge, understanding and skills to challenge discrimination, injustice and associated perceptions. This means that members of the GST community consistently reflect and promote positive attitudes and behaviours. We aim to empower all to make informed and responsible choices about their own actions. We aim to engender a personal and collective sense of responsibility and accountability to ensure that there is true equality of opportunity for all.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

In an ever changing world, we have the responsibility to prepare our children to become 21<sup>st</sup> century citizens by ensuring that equality legislation, policy and values are implemented and taught. We aim to achieve this by treating each person as an individual, celebrating that individuality and difference, and empowering them with the confidence and knowledge to question and challenge.

Our curriculum reflects diversity and equality, providing planned, contextualised opportunities for children to learn, to explore and to succeed. This will allow a clarity and depth of understanding needed to challenge inequality, discrimination and injustice and will develop respect for and an acceptance of difference.

Members of our Trust community will strive to lead by example and be role models who actively promote equality as well as embrace and value diversity. All members of the Trust community have a responsibility to treat each other with respect, to ensure everyone is valued, and to speak out and report if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.

The Trust Board and Local Governing Board/Body will take appropriate action where schools fail to comply with statutory requirements in respect of this policy.

The Head is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given necessary training and support.

Everyone connected with GST will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in all aspects of their work for the Trust, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for those with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of issues facing equality and diversity. We will take steps to ensure all visitors adhere to our commitment to equality.

## 4. Ethos and Atmosphere

At GST we demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the Trust and the community of schools. There is an openness of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to GST schools. All within the Trust community will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour, e.g. through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions.

All pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect. The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect that we value diversity as well as our commitment to equality, and are frequently monitored. Provision is made to cater for the needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

## 5. Monitoring and Review

GST is working towards greater equality in the whole school community. Schools use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those we serve and to provide learning environments in which each individual is encouraged to respect and value others' differences, as well as to fulfil their own potential.

Schools regularly assess pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups, (Ethnicity, Gender, LGBT, SEN, FSM, Gifted and Talented, Vulnerable or At Risk), to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. Schools use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary. Resources are made available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing bodies and boards receive regular updates on pupil performance information.

As well as monitoring pupil performance information, schools and the Trust also regularly monitor a range of other information relating to attendance, exclusions and truancy, racism, disability, sexism, stereotyping, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, and all forms of bullying and participation in extended learning opportunities. Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and provide specific support as required, including pastoral support. GST also provides training to staff on equality and diversity.

GST is committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. The Trust aims to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce in order to respect and respond to the diverse needs of our population. As part of this work we collate information on our workforce in order to monitor equality of opportunity.

## 6. Developing Best Practice

### **Teaching and Learning**

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:

- provide equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds and types of families, without stereotyping and that promote a positive image of and attitude towards disability and disabled people
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour



- provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and religions, celebrate the diversity of other cultures and to celebrate all types of families, including same-sex parents, single parents and carer families
- use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- develop pupils advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity and makes best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils
- promote and celebrate the contribution of different cultures to the subject matter
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that involve all pupil groups
- take account of the attainment of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- identify resources and training to support staff development.

## Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other area of discrimination. The Trust believes that all pupils can achieve at least national norms. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others; to be the best they can be. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

GST schools place a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. The school will provide an environment in which all pupils have equal access to facilities and resources and are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.

Consideration is given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including learning spaces that visually celebrate diversity through posters and displays.

## Curriculum

At GST, we aim to ensure that planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross-curricular themes.

Pupils have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality including religious and cultural identity, gender identity and sexual orientation in an age-appropriate way.

Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles. All pupils have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression.

## Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within GST schools is a high priority. These resources will:

- reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society
- reflect a variety of viewpoints
- show positive images of all genders in society
- show positive images of different types of families, including same-sex parents, single parents and carers families
- include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- be accessible to all members of the school community

- actively combat stereotypes and provide examples of real role models

## 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 consciously offend
- does not limit potential or expectation
- creates the conditions for all people to grow healthy self esteem
- is accurate in referring to particular groups or individuals

All members of our school and Trust community have a responsibility to challenge language that impinges equality.

## 7. Extended Learning Opportunities

It is the policy of GST to provide equal access to all activities from the time children enter the Trust.

## 8. Personal Development and Care, Guidance and Support

Staff take account of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination and the experience and needs of particular groups.

All pupils are encouraged to consider the full range of life opportunities available to them, with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender, race or sexual orientation (whilst acknowledging that a disability may impose some practical boundaries to some career aspirations).

All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination.

Positive role models exist across the Trust and schools ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community. Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community and celebrating difference as a positive attribute.

## 9. Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This must include pupils' access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible. We encourage the career development and aspirations of all school staff. It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils.

## 10. Staff Recruitment

All those involved in recruitment and selection are aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure good practice through the recruitment and selection process.

Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions. All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices. Employment policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to check compliance with legislation.



## 11. Partnerships with Parents/Carers/Families and the Wider Community

GST Schools work with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential and to become trusted partners in children's education. All parents/carers are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school.

Members of the local community, including multi faith communities, are encouraged to join in school activities in celebrating difference.

## Appendix 1: Stonewall Education Champions

Griffin Schools Trust is a Stonewall Education Champion and below is an overview of this programme. Stonewall's Education Champions programme provides bespoke support and guidance in preventing and tackling biphobic, transphobic and homophobic bullying and celebrating difference.

As part of the Education Champions programme, GST is working to establish ways to address homophobic bullying and promote a safe and inclusive learning environment for all young people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils and those with same-sex parents.

The programme is based on Stonewall's work with over 12,000 primary and secondary schools since 2007 to develop age-appropriate resources and guidance.

- Homophobic bullying is endemic in Britain's schools and affects all pupils. Nine in ten secondary and two in five primary school teachers say young people, regardless of their sexual orientation, experience homophobic bullying, name calling or harassment. (YouGov poll 2014, as published in *The Teachers Report 2014*).
- Homophobic bullying impacts on pupils' attendance, attainment and future prospects. Two in five lesbian, gay and bisexual young people who have experienced homophobic bullying have skipped school at some point because of it. Furthermore, the negative use of the word 'gay' can stop children with gay parents from being themselves and talking about their families.
- Ofsted inspections are focusing more on behaviour. In their inspections of behaviour and safety, inspectors will judge the work schools do around prejudice based bullying, including homophobic bullying, and how they celebrate difference.
- Public bodies are legally required to take proactive action. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on all public bodies, including schools, to take steps to eradicate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations.



## Appendix 2: Glossary

**Age:** Refers to a person having a particular age (for example, 32 year-olds) or being within an age group (for example, 18-30 year-olds).

**Bullying:** The intentional repetitive or persistent hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

**Direct discrimination:** Refers to less favourable treatment because of a person's protected characteristic.

**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 their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Equality:** Equality is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are treated fairly and equally and no less favourably, specific to their needs, based on protected characteristics.

**Diversity:** Diversity is recognising and valuing that individuals are unique, each having their own values, beliefs, attitude, culture, gender identity, racial background, sexuality, skills and life experience.

**Gender reassignment:** Is the process of transitioning from one sex to another or transition to genderqueer or non-binary. See also trans, transgender, transsexual.

**Gender:** Gender identity can correspond with sex assigned at birth, but not necessarily. Someone's actual or perceived masculinity or femininity, but can also be defined as genderqueer or genderfluid. See also sex and trans.

**Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It may also involve unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or be related to gender reassignment or sex.

**Indirect discrimination:** Is when a provision, criterion or practice is applied in a way that creates disproportionate disadvantage for a person with a protected characteristic as compared to those who do not share that characteristic, and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

**Protected characteristics:** The equality duty covers the following characteristics: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race and ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and pregnancy or maternity. These are also referred to as protected groups. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

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

**Religion or belief:** Religion means any religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included.

**Sex:** Assigned at birth based on biological characteristics. Different to gender.

**Sexual orientation:** Is about being attracted to the same and other sex.

**Stereotyping:** Is when you judge a group of people based on your own and/or others opinions and/or encounters.

**Trans:** The terms ‘trans people’ and ‘transgender people’ are both often used as umbrella terms for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex. This includes those who propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process of gender reassignment to live permanently in their acquired gender, transvestite/crossdressing people (those who wear clothing traditionally associated with the other gender either occasionally or more regularly), androgyne/polygender people (those who have nonbinary gender identities and do not identify as male or female), and others who define as gender variant.

**Victimisation:** Subjecting a person to a detriment because they have made a complaint of discrimination, or are thought to have done so; or because they have supported someone else who has made a complaint of discrimination. Victimisation is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.