



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

This Policy applies to all year groups at Thomas's Schools, including the EYFS.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Thomas's Admissions Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Code of Conduct, EAL Policy, Most Able Policy, RSE Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, SEND Policy, SENDA Policy, Wellbeing Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

“Diversity is a Fact, Equality is a Choice, Inclusion is an Action, Belonging is an Outcome”

Thomas's is a group of Christian schools open to children of all faiths and committed to providing a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum for all. All pupils in school are valued equally and efforts are made to ensure any prejudice or discrimination is not tolerated.

We recognise that the needs of individuals and groups of pupils are many and varied, and that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all, whatever their race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion, colour, ethnic origin or nationality, as well as those with special educational needs or those who may need support to learn English as an additional language.

Equality underpins the value system of Thomas's. The ethos of the schools is one of tolerance, respect, understanding and striving for excellence in all. All members of the Thomas's community are encouraged to understand, appreciate and value the differences between us and to challenge negative labels and attitudes.

It is acknowledged that discrimination may be direct or indirect and includes victimisation and harassment. Promotion of equality, celebration of diversity and inclusion must exist in our employment procedures and in our dealings with pupils, parents and other members of

the community. As such it should be noted that all references to parents and carers throughout all our policies are intended to be entirely gender neutral.

Whilst the ethnic backgrounds of our pupils and teaching staff are predominantly white; we recognise a particular responsibility to promote an understanding of and respect for the diverse and multi-ethnic wider society of London and the country as a whole and to increase admissions from under-represented minority groups.

2. AIMS

The aims of this policy are:

- to promote mutual respect and tolerance so that a positive attitude towards self and others is encouraged and maintained;
- to assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions;
- to develop awareness of the diversity of society in which we all live and to learn to value diversity in others;
- to acknowledge differences in a way which is open, welcoming, enquiring and respectful;
- to prevent stereo-typing on the basis of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion, colour, ethnic origin, marital status or nationality;
- to ensure that every child is included and not disadvantaged;
- to provide a safe and caring environment, free from discrimination and to promote equality of access and opportunity for all members of the school community;
- to be aware of and sensitive too different family structures, backgrounds and values;
- to promote equal opportunities, celebrate diversity and eliminate racial discrimination – being actively anti-racist in our schools, whilst continuing to promote and uphold the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs..

The Schools aim to make teachers aware of the principles for inclusion and to develop cultures, policies and practices to enable us to respond to and support all learners.

Three principles for inclusion

- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs.
- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Principals

The principals are responsible for:

- providing for environments and expectations in the Thomas's schools that actively tackle discrimination and promote equal opportunities and inclusion;
- ensuring that the schools comply with the Equality Act (2010).

3.2 The Head

The Head is responsible for:

- ensuring that the policy is available and that staff, pupils and parents know about it;

- ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed;
- providing training for staff on equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion;
- providing training and support for staff in carrying out their responsibilities;
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment or discrimination for any reason;
- working with parents and the wider community to tackle prejudice against any of the protected characteristics;
- ensuring that staff recruitment procedures follow good equal opportunities practice;
- ensuring that all members of the school community are treated fairly, equally and with respect;
- acknowledging individuals' rights and roles in the world of work and the work environment.

3.3. Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion Leader

Each school will appoint a member of staff to lead on equality, diversity and inclusion.

They are responsible for:

- ensuring that policies, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an EHC plan and do not undermine the fundamental British values;
- promoting equal opportunities for all pupils, parents and staff;
- co-ordinating work in the school and ensuring an environment in which all pupils feel valued;
- ensuring equality and diversity is considered and applied in other relevant school policies;
- auditing and advising on appropriate resources;
- organising and advising on events to celebrate diversity e.g. Black History Month
- cross-referencing curriculum links to opportunities to incorporate a range of ethnic, cultural and religious factors;
- monitoring attainment levels and progress of different groups;
- developing partnerships with parents and community groups.

3.4 Members of staff

All members of staff are responsible for:

- ensuring all pupils receive a rich provision of classroom and extra-curricular activities that develop a range of character attributes such as resilience and grit, which underpin success in education and employment;
- ensuring an effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society;
- promoting an awareness of all cultures and religions through the whole curriculum;
- challenging discriminative attitudes and behaviour and selecting appropriate methods of addressing these issues;
- encouraging everyone to value the contributions of others regardless of cultural and/or religious differences;
- being sensitive to the effects of competition and/or collaborative work;
- providing pupils with the opportunity to experience aspects of different cultures at first hand
- using role-play to help pupils develop empathy and understanding for each other;
- including literature, music and art which promotes the achievements of women, ethnic groups and people with disabilities;
- selecting classroom resources with regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature, including checking displays, reading schemes and resources'

- using positive images to combat negative stereotypes;
- understanding different types of learning and develop and encourage different teaching methods to take account of these;

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Curriculum

The school promotes the principles of fairness and equality for all. It aims to achieve this through the educational opportunities provided. These include:

- paying regard to the guidance in Keeping children safe in education (2021) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This is defined as: 'protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development' ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effect care' and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes'
- having regard to the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years' (2017), 'Development Matters' (2012) and the non-statutory curriculum guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2020).
- ensuring the PSHE curriculum includes issue of valuing diversity, difference and disability;
- using appropriate and varied teaching styles to maximise expectations and the achievements of all individuals;
- ensuring that the curriculum allows all pupils to participate in a wide range of activities, building on previous experience and extending learning;
- providing opportunities for pupils to work with other children in a variety of groups within their class and across the school;
- ensuring the timetable enables all pupils to have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school;
- providing a balanced and positive range of images for all groups regardless of gender, religion, ethnic origin, age or ability;
- screening the reading and audio-visual resources to ensure that positive images of women, people of different races and cultural backgrounds and people with disabilities are promoted.;
- ensuring that children with special needs have access to the curriculum through the implementation of the special needs policy.
- offering a wide range of sporting activities to all pupils, some of mixed gender and others of single sex;
- providing positive educational experiences and support for each child's individual point of view, with the aim of promoting positive social attitudes and respect for all;
- being conscious of the need to celebrate the cultural diversity within the wider community as well as the school's community;
- using assemblies as a forum where the children are encouraged to acknowledge and celebrate individual differences.
- staging events and visits with the aim of promotion equal opportunities using display materials which promote the positive contribution of women to society, racial equality, cultural diversity and awareness of disability.
- involving pupils, staff and parents in welcoming the cultural and ethnic diversity of our community.

4.2 Race

Thomas's is committed to:

- promoting equality of opportunity and to promoting good relations between people of different race and nationality;
- dealing effectively and swiftly with any racial discrimination or harassment;
- promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff;
- challenging stereotyping and prejudice.

Any racist incidents will be recorded and will be subject to sanctions as set out in each school's Behaviour Policy.

4.3 Gender

All pupils should have equal access to all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, subject choices and extra-curricular activities. It may be necessary for pupils to receive different treatment in order to ensure equality of opportunity and the school will pursue strategies to ensure that all pupils are able to develop their full potential. Approaches are promoted and monitored to provide equality of opportunity including:

- awareness of the possibility of gender bias in teaching and learning materials and styles;
- ensuring teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to all children, regardless of gender;
- encouraging pupils to work and play freely with others of both sexes;
- teaching and other groupings are organised on the basis of criteria other than gender, for example age, ability, friendship;
- equality between the sexes is recognised when giving/delegating responsibility and noting the achievement of both staff and children;
- discipline procedures – notably rewards and sanctions – are the same for both sexes.

The number of children and adults who identify as trans or pan-gender or are gender fluid has risen significantly over recent years. At Thomas's we respect the right of all pupils and members of staff to feel comfortable with their own gender identity and are committed to offering equal opportunities to all. Where possible, adjustments may be made to acknowledge particular needs, such as changing facilities. At all times the welfare of the individual and of the whole community will remain at the centre of any decision-making.

4.4 Disability

While Thomas's physical facilities for the disabled are limited due to the age and configuration of the buildings, the school will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's culture, policies and procedures are made accessible to those who have disabilities. The School's Accessibility Plans give details of how each school aims to accommodate as far as they can, the needs of applicants, pupils, members of the staff, parents and visitors who have disabilities.

In line with the 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice' (2015) Thomas's will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children with disabilities are not disadvantaged in their access to:

- the physical environment
- the programme of learning and development offered
- the information provided to children and parents
- high aspirations and outcomes

The school will ensure that undesirable discrimination does not occur and that disabled people are not be placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with others who are not disabled.

4.5 Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

For pupils who have special educational needs or particular needs with regard to learning English as an additional language; teachers have a duty to take account of their difficulties and support individuals or groups so they can participate effectively in the curriculum and feel fully included. The school will:

- ensure that the 'hidden curriculum' and extra-curricular activities are barrier free and do not exclude any pupils;
- work closely with parents to support pupils with special educational needs;
- provide in-service training on inclusion for staff;
- liaise with outside agencies and professionals as necessary.

Further details on these areas can be found in the specific SEND and EAL Policies.

4.6 Parents

Thomas's will endeavour to ensure that parents are informed of the principles and philosophies that lie behind this Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

- Parents will be made to feel welcome and all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure physical access to the school.
- The school will provide a secluded area for mothers who wish to breastfeed their babies or express milk. Parents who wish to make use of this facility are encouraged to speak to the School Office.
- Through the Code of Conduct and in all dealings with parents, the schools will demonstrate and encourage respect.
- If a parent or carer believes that our practices or procedures are not meeting the aims of this policy or that they or their children have been treated less favourably because of their ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, disability or special educational needs they may make a formal complaint under our complaints procedure. This is a whole school policy, which also applies to Early Years.
- In this and in all our policies it should be noted that any reference to a "parent" applies not only to a pupil's birth parents, but to adoptive, step or foster parents, or other persons who have parental responsibility for or care of a pupil.

5. MONITORING

This policy was fully rewritten in February 2021 to combine the previous separate Equal Opportunities, Race Equality and Inclusion Policies to ensure the schools' approach is transparent, fair and consistent to all protected characteristics.

The following areas will be monitored regularly to assess the effectiveness of this policy:

- Progress, attainment and assessment;
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusion;
- Pupils' personal development and pastoral care;
- Teaching and learning;
- Admission and attendance;

- The curriculum;
- Relationships with parents and the wider community.

The Registrars will keep ethnic data, where given, on prospective parents and monitor feedback and follow-up to registration and take up of places.

The Heads will consider the findings of all monitoring data and use it to inform target setting in the schools' improvement plans.

6. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy pays due regard to the following statutory guidance and other government advice.

DfE School Census Specification 2018-2019 (February 2019)

GIDS 'Supporting gender non-conforming and trans-identified students in schools' (2018)

DfE 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years' (2017)

DfE Statutory guidance 'SEND Code of Practice: 0 – 25 years' (January 2015)

The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations (2014)

Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance 'What equality law means for you as an education provider: schools' (2014)

DfE Departmental advice 'The Equality Act (April 2010) and Schools' (May 2014)

DfE 'Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils (November 2013 and 2014)

7. POLICY REVIEW RECORD

This policy will be reviewed every two years unless there is a change in legislation		
Created: April 2010	By:	Jill Kelham, Vice Principal
Latest Review: February 2021	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal Ben Thomas's, Diversity Committee Chair Suzannah Cryer, Diversity Lead, Battersea Shazia Chand, Diversity Lead, Clapham Annette Dobson, Diversity Lead, Fulham Adrian Costello, Diversity Lead, Kensington Dianne Barratt, Consultant
Approved: February 2021	By:	Tobyn Thomas, Ben Thomas, Principals Simon O'Malley, Headmaster, Battersea Phil Ward, Headmaster, Clapham Annette Dobson, Headmistress, Fulham Jo Ebner, Headmistress, Kensington
Next Review: May 2022	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal Cross-School Leads