



EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation		
Created	April 2010	Vice Principal
Last Review	August 2023	Head of Compliance and Health & Safety
Approved	September 2023	Education Board

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, English as an Additional Language Policy, More Able Policy, Relationship and Sex Education Policy, Gender Identity Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy, SEND Accessibility Policy, Staffing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement of Intent, Wellbeing Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Thomas's is a group of Christian schools open to pupils 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.

Equity 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 equity and 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.

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. All references to parents and carers throughout all our policies are intended to be entirely gender neutral.

2. AIMS

The aims of this policy are:

- to prevent stereotyping on the basis of the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation,
- and in addition to prevent stereotyping on the basis of gender identity; diverse family structures; colour; ethnic origin and nationality and culture;
- 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 ensure that every member of the community is included and not disadvantaged;
- to provide a safe and caring environment, free from discrimination and to promote equity, equality of access and opportunity for all members of the school community;
- to be aware of and sensitive to different family structures, backgrounds and values;
- to promote equity, equal opportunities, celebrate diversity and eliminate discrimination – being actively anti-discriminatory in our schools;
- 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 Proprietor

The Proprietor is responsible for:

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

3.2 *The Head*

The Head is responsible for:

- ensuring that the policy is made available to staff, pupils and parents;
- ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed;
- providing training for staff on equity, 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 EDI 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 *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Leader*

Each school will appoint a member of staff to lead on equity, diversity and inclusion. They are responsible for:

- supporting and advising the school on EDI matters
- 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 EDI for all pupils, parents and staff;
- collecting and analysing EDI metrics;
- ensuring all groups within each school community has a voice;
- coordinating work in the school and ensuring an environment in which all pupils feel valued and have a voice; including auditing provision and gathering stakeholder voice
- ensuring EDI is considered and applied in other relevant school policies;
- auditing and advising on appropriate resources;
- organising and advising on events to celebrate diversity
- ensure curriculum meets strategic EDI aims
- cross-referencing curriculum links to opportunities to incorporate representation from minoritised groups ;
- monitoring attainment levels and progress of different groups in conjunction with Assessment Lead;
- developing partnerships with parents and community groups.

3.4 *Members of staff*

All members of staff are responsible for:

- upholding this policy
- ensuring school is an inclusive environment where everyone feels safe
- positively role model inclusive and anti-discriminatory behaviour, including a spirit of reflection and willingness to be open to challenge

- ensuring an effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society;
- supporting pupils to be global citizens;
- promoting an awareness of all cultures and religions through the whole curriculum;
- challenging discriminatory attitudes and behaviour, bias and/or microaggressions and selecting appropriate methods of addressing these issues;
- encouraging everyone to value the contributions of others;
- 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
- support and participate in measures introduced to promote equity, diversity and inclusion

In addition, teachers 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;
- seeking opportunities to help pupils develop empathy and understanding for each other;
- using a range of teaching resources in all pupil activities which actively seek to break stereotypes;;
- selecting teaching resources with regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and not provide material that is discriminatory 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;

Parents

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

- will uphold the principles of this policy and the Thomas's central value of Be Kind
- will be made to feel welcome and all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure physical access to the school.
- are invited to engage in a range of activities in support of the schools' EDI work e.g. parent seminars, curriculum awareness

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 they may make a formal complaint under our complaints procedure.

Pupils

All pupils are expected to:

- uphold the Thomas's values and especially the central value of Be Kind
- positively role model inclusive and anti-discriminatory behaviour, including a spirit of reflection and willingness to be open to challenge
- any discriminatory behaviour will be handled in accordance with the school Behaviour Policy.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Curriculum

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

- paying regard to the statutory guidance in 'Keeping children safe in education' to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. 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 effective care' and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes'
- having regard to the 'EYFS Statutory Framework' (2021), 'Development Matters' (2012) and the non-statutory curriculum guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021).
- ensuring the curriculum values diversity and difference;
- 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 (including events and visits), building on previous experience and extending learning;
- ensuring all pupils have the opportunity to learn about EDI in all curriculum areas including in PSHE;
- providing opportunities for pupils to work with other pupils in a variety of groups within their class and across the school;
- ensuring all pupils to have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school;
- offering a wide range of sporting activities to all pupils, some of mixed sex and others of single sex;
- providing a balanced and positive range of images for all groups;
- auditing teaching resources to ensure that positive images are promoted where appropriate;
- ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including those with an EHC Plan have access to the curriculum through the implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy;
- 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 pupils are encouraged to acknowledge and celebrate individual differences.
- involving pupils, staff and parents in celebrating diversity of our community.

4.2 Incidents

Any discriminatory incidents will be recorded and will be subject to sanctions as set out in each school's Behaviour Policy or the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

5. MONITORING METRICS AND STAKEHOLDER VOICE

The following areas will be monitored regularly, led by the Head of EDI and school leads in conjunction with each school, to assess the effectiveness of this policy:

- Behaviour, discipline and exclusion;
- Pupils' personal development and pastoral care;
- The curriculum;
- Teaching and learning;
- Progress, attainment and assessment;
- Admission and attendance;
- Relationships with parents and the wider community;
- Colleague recruitment and retention
- Marketing materials

The Registrars will keep data on ethnicity, 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 metrics 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 Statutory guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (Sept 2023)

DfE 'EYFS Statutory Framework' (2023)

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)