

# Equality Policy Plan

## Polar Re-Start



**Approved by:** Local Governing Body **Date:** July 2023

**Last reviewed on:** July 2023

**Next review due by:** July 2024

## **Background**

The Equality Act (2010) was introduced to combine the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Previously public bodies were bound by these three sets of duties to promote disability, race and gender equality. In April 2011 these were replaced by a single public sector equality duty (known as the PD or the equality duty).

This new duty extends to all the aspects of a person's identity that are protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are known as protected characteristics and are:

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

## **General duty**

Public bodies including schools have a general duty to have due regard when making decisions and developing policies, to:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

## Specific duty

To help schools in England meet the general equality duty, there are two specific duties that they are required to carry out. These are:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the equality duty.
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives.

The Governing Body of ISP Polar Re-Start actively seeks to promote policy measures to cease inequality, all forms of discrimination and enhance opportunity and well-being within every aspect of the school's business for pupils, staff, governors and community stakeholders.

## Check list for school staff and governors

- Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training? Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides?
- How has your Equality Plan been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents and pupils?
- Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?
- Are all pupils encouraged to participate in school life? Are pupils who make a positive contribution reflective of the school's diversity e.g. through class assemblies / school council?
- Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other pupils? Are racist incidents regularly reported to the governing body and local authority?
- Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of your school community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as class assemblies?
- Does the school take part in events to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the school, and are issues such as language barriers considered?
- Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?

- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?

## **ISP Polar Re-Start 's School Equality Plan**

1. Mission statement
2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice
3. Equal Opportunities for Staff
4. Equality and the law regarding Race, Disability, Gender, Sexual orientation and Community cohesion
5. Consultation
6. Roles and Responsibilities
7. Tackling discrimination
8. Review of progress and impact
9. Publishing the plan

### **1. Mission statement**

ISP Polar Re-Start is a day specialist school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, communication including Speech and Language disorders, cognition and additional learning needs. All have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education and Health Care Plan. Our school is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At ISP Polar Re-Start, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

### **2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice**

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

We aim to provide the best opportunity for all our pupils to achieve their full academic and social potential. We also seek to maintain a warm, welcoming and open ethos in which each child can be happy, secure, valued and fulfilled and wherein the individuality of each child is recognised and nurtured. To do this we:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils

Our admissions arrangements are based on the needs of the children and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors. Admissions to the school are agreed by the Local Authority admissions team.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's positive Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

### **3. Equal Opportunities for ISP Polar Re-Start Staff**

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

#### Employer duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all

#### **4. Legislation and guidance**

This document meets the requirements of [schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010](#) and the Department for Education (DfE) [guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010](#).

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#), 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled pupil faces in comparison with non-disabled pupils. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

#### **5. Consultation and involvement**

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from parent questionnaires and parents' open days
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET
- Feedback from the school council and PD lessons
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Personalised Provision map and Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)
- Feedback at Governing body meetings

#### **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

The role of governors

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.

- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

#### The role of the Head Teacher (or SLT)

- It is the Head Teacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and he is supported by the governing body in doing so
- It is the Head Teacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations
- The Head Teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities
- The Head Teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life
- The Head Teacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness

#### The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Head Teacher
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents

### **7. Tackling discrimination**

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / Head Teacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Head Teacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a regular basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti. A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school. An initial internal concern form should be completed by the person reporting the incident. This will then be investigated and if appropriate be reported online to KCC by a member of the SLT.

## **8. Review of progress and impact**

The Plan has been agreed by the Head Teacher. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan every three years and review the entire plan along with an action plan on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

## **9. Publishing the plan**

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, we will:

- Publish our plan on the school website
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications
- Make sure hard copies are available



## ISP POLAR RE-START ACTION PLAN

The new Action Plan from September 2023-2024 will have the following objectives:

	Objectives	Lead person/s	Action	Time Frame	Review
1	Prepare pupils for the next phase of education KS3/KS4. ISP Polar Re-Start will ensure they fully understand all equality issues.	HT/ teaching & support staff	H&S As a refresher for all staff, to go through the principle expectations and their responsibilities to incorporate Equality Act in PD	July 2024	<p>The ethos of the school focuses on having respect for others and celebrating being different, staff and pupils understand this and work towards this in and out of the classroom.</p> <p>A strong focus on PD lessons ensures students learn from Year 7 the need to respect all diversity including cultural diversity.</p> <p>A varied Humanities curriculum supports the schools philosophy regarding diversity.</p> <p>The supportive and accepting nature of the school ensures students are in an environment where they feel confident in expressing their views and opinions.</p> <p>Weekly assemblies, celebration carousel days focused on different cultures and ethnic events in the school that pupils have the opportunity to look at the cultures of other countries e.g.</p>

2	Governor awareness of their responsibilities	CoG	Ensure this subject is reviewed at an FGB meeting or within committees	On-going	The Governors are aware of their responsibilities and ensure the policies of the school are consistent with the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice. They introduced a code of conduct and have whistle blowing, complaints and staff grievance policies in place to ensure any inequality within the school is reported.
3	Challenge race and gender stereotypes in subject choices and career advice and promote positive attitudes toward diversity.	Teaching staff	As above	On-going	See objective one
4	Check all school policies and assess them to ensure equality issues are adequately addressed.	Each policy leader	All policy leaders to confirm to SBM when they have completed this and whether changes have been made	Ongoing	The policies are regularly reviewed and signed off using best practice templates and guidance.
5	All school policies to be accessible to staff on the intranet.	Q drive	Any changes due to the Equality Act to be highlighted to staff	Ongoing	The school policies are available in our admin office and available on the shared staff drive.

6	Continue with Special days for pupils to include all aspects of equality including keeping safe in all situations including Esafety.	Head of Wellbeing	Plan these into the school year and seek feedback after each event.	Ongoing	We celebrate, respect and raise awareness for diversity by anti- bullying week and online safety, charity fayres and fundraising events - children in need and comic relief, sports days. We have had several wellbeing days and culture and community days in which we received lots of positive feedback from staff and pupils.
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7	Raise awareness by discussing matters of public interest relating to equality at parental events	HT/ Deputy	Research matters of public interest, arrange a coffee morning, ensure parents are informed in advance, raise awareness and discuss subject or matter with parents.	July 2024	
8	Continue with Special days for pupils to celebrate, respect and raise awareness for diversity by Introducing culture days and further develop and embed wellbeing days.	Personal Development Lead & Head of Wellbeing	<p>Arrange culture and wellbeing days.</p> <p>Arrange mental health awareness days</p> <p>Embed this practice by producing an annual cycle</p> <p>Seek feedback from staff and pupils</p>	July 2024	

9	Recognising Girls are a minority within the school and we will provide additional opportunities for social interactions.	Head of Wellbeing	Continue to arrange social interactions for girls within the school. Monitor with feedback	July 2024	
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