



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Date of last review	October 2020
Review Cycle	Annual

Legal framework

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by these principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value. We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender or gender identity
- Whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual identity.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference. Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must, nevertheless, take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised
- Religion, belief or faith background
- Sexual identity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin, national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist. In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: Society as a whole should benefit.

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled
- People of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys
- Gay people as well as straight.

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.

We keep our equality objectives under review.

The curriculum

We keep our curriculum or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out above.

Ethos and organisation

We ensure the principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- Pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- Teaching styles and strategies
- Admissions and attendance
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

SILC is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3 and students are required to sign a Code of Conduct to indicate their understanding of the consequences of the following:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs

- prejudices around racism including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia

Regular group discussions take place covering the above prejudices and the benefits of an inclusive society (see Principle 6)

Roles and responsibilities

The Director is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos within the centre
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- support students for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and, as appropriate, to all students and their parents and carers.

All staff have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail and attend training courses where applicable.

Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other policies are dealt with, as defined in the staff handbook and student Code of Conduct.