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| Policy Title: <b>Equalities Policy and Objectives</b>   | Effective Date:         | March 2025 |
| LT Member Responsible: Deputy Headteacher (ACS)         | Policy Review Date:     | March 2027 |
|   | Objectives Review Date: | June 2026  |
| Governors' Committee Responsible: Community and Culture |                         |            |

## 1. Aims

- 1.1. Sheldon aims to promote respect for difference and diversity in accordance with our vision to provide high-quality education, enrichment and pastoral care that improves the life chances of **all** students, underpinned by our values of Being Kind, Being Brave, and Being the Best You.
- 1.2. We aim to:
  - 1.2.1. Ensure that Sheldon School is a family, where high quality relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We ensure that **all** students feel safe and cared for
  - 1.2.2. Ensure that **every** student can thrive regardless of social background, academic ability, or special educational need
  - 1.2.3. Recognise that education is more than what happens in the classroom. We are rightly proud of the experiences students will receive through our **extra-curricular** offer, trips, and visits
  - 1.2.4. Pride ourselves on having the highest expectations of **all** students and staff
  - 1.2.5. Passionately work together with **parents** and our **wider community** to ensure success for **all** our students
  - 1.2.6. Be kind, brave and try our best at all times
- 1.3. Sheldon aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:
  - 1.3.1. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
  - 1.3.2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
  - 1.3.3. Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

## 2. Legislation and Guidance

- 2.1. This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:
  - 2.1.1. [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination

- 2.1.2. [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives
- 2.2. This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#). It also complies with Sheldon School's funding agreement and articles of association.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 3.1. The Trust Board will:
  - 3.1.1. Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, students, and parent carers
  - 3.1.2. Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
  - 3.1.3. Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher
- 3.2. The school's Equality Link Governor will:
  - 3.2.1. Meet with the designated member of staff for equality every term, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
  - 3.2.2. Ensure they are familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
  - 3.2.3. Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
  - 3.2.4. Report back to the full governing board regarding any issues
- 3.3. The Headteacher will:
  - 3.3.1. Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and students
  - 3.3.2. Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors
- 3.4. The designated member of staff for equality is the Deputy Headteacher (ACS). They will support the Headteacher by:
  - 3.4.1. Promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff, students, and wider stakeholders
  - 3.4.2. Meeting with the equality link governor every term to raise and discuss any issues
  - 3.4.3. Supporting the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and coordinating the delivery of training as necessary
- 3.5. All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8 in addition to:
  - 3.5.1. Complying with Sheldon's Equalities Policy
  - 3.5.2. Promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
  - 3.5.3. Dealing with any discriminatory and prejudice related incidents that may occur in line with the school's policies and procedures
  - 3.5.4. Implementing a curriculum that reflect the principles of this document
  - 3.5.5. Supporting students where English is an additional language
  - 3.5.6. Remaining up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their job role

#### **4. Eliminating Discrimination**

- 4.1. The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.
- 4.2. Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.
- 4.3. Our values of Being Kind, Being Brave, and Being the Best You apply to all, students and staff, attending or working at Sheldon School.
- 4.4. Students are fully aware that discriminatory behaviour towards their peers or others will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy. Similarly, staff are fully aware that discriminatory behaviour towards students, their colleagues, or others will not be tolerated. Complaints will be investigated under the school's Dignity at Work and Disciplinary Policies.
- 4.5. Trustees are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example, during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting, it is recorded in the meeting minutes.
- 4.6. New staff receive training on the school's expectations around non-discriminatory conduct towards students and colleagues as part of their induction. All staff receive refresher training every September as part of the presentation of The Sheldon Way document.
- 4.7. The school has a designated member of staff, the Deputy Headteacher (ACS) for monitoring equality issues. They report and update the Headteacher and Trustees via the Community and Culture Committee.
- 4.8. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students, and parent carers, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. Allegations of intolerant behaviour towards expressing their religious belief will be investigated by the Senior Leadership Team.
- 4.9. The school regularly reminds students of the various ways that they can report concerns through the school or other agencies, anonymously or otherwise, including through the school's ePraise platform. Students are also encouraged to share any concerns with their Tutors, Head and Deputy Head of Year, or Pastoral Lead.
- 4.10. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice, including but not limited to:
  - 4.10.1. Prejudices around disability and special educational needs
  - 4.10.2. Prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities
  - 4.10.3. Prejudice reflecting sexism and homophobia
- 4.11. There is guidance for staff on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded, and dealt with.
- 4.12. The Deputy Headteacher (ACS) works closely with the school's SENCO to ensure that any concerns of our special educational needs (SEND) students who encounter discrimination due to disabilities are investigated and addressed.

## **5. Advancing Equality of Opportunity**

- 5.1. As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:
  - 5.1.1. Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. students with disabilities, or LGBTQIA+ students who are being subjected to bullying)
  - 5.1.2. Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim students to pray at prescribed times)
  - 5.1.3. Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all students to be involved in the full range of school societies)
- 5.2. In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:
  - 5.2.1. Publish attainment data each academic year showing how students with different characteristics are performing
  - 5.2.2. Analyse the data referenced above to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
  - 5.2.3. Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
  - 5.2.4. Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our students

## **6. Fostering Good Relations**

- 6.1. The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:
  - 6.1.1. Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes explicit teaching in PSRE, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, students will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
  - 6.1.2. Holding assemblies and delivering tutor time work dealing with relevant issues
  - 6.1.3. Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies and engaging with parent carers about inclusive practices
  - 6.1.4. Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with possible tensions between different groups of students within the school. For example, ensuring that our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of students from a range of backgrounds. All students are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs
  - 6.1.5. We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics (e.g. Representation Matters and the National Autistic Society) which helps inform and develop our approach

## **7. Equality Considerations in Decision-making**

- 7.1. The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

7.2. The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- 7.2.1. Cuts across any religious holidays
- 7.2.2. Is accessible to students with disabilities
- 7.2.3. Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

## 8. Equality Objectives

### 8.1. Objective 1

- 8.1.1. **What:** To train all members of staff and governors involved in recruitment on equal opportunities, non-discrimination (conscious and unconscious biases), and inclusive recruitment practices.
- 8.1.2. **Why:** Training staff involved in recruitment on equal opportunities, non-discrimination, and inclusive practices ensures fair hiring processes, reduces bias, and promotes diversity. It fosters a culture of equity, supports compliance with legal requirements, and will help the school attract and retain talent that reflects and supports the diverse nature of its student body and wider community.
- 8.1.3. **How will impact be measured:** All staff and governors involved with interviews will have received training in advance of conducting an interview. Refresher training will be provided in September as part of the presentation of the Sheldon Way document.

### 8.2. Objective 2

- 8.2.1. **What:** To ensure that anybody sanctioned for harassment and/or discrimination receives a follow-up education session to provide re-education on appropriate behaviours, and the impact of discriminatory actions.
- 8.2.2. **Why:** Providing follow-up education for those sanctioned for harassment or discrimination promotes accountability, re-education, and behaviour change. It helps individuals understand the impact of their actions, reinforces the school's commitment to equality, and fosters a safer, more inclusive environment. This approach supports personal growth and reduces the likelihood of repeated offences.
- 8.2.3. **How will impact be measured:** Review of the number of follow-up education sessions completed by individuals sanctioned for harassment and/or discrimination against a person who holds a protected characteristic(s); a reduction of repeat offences by perpetrators of harassment and/or discrimination.

### 8.3. Objective 3

- 8.3.1. **What:** To constantly review and adapt the curriculum to ensure it reflects and celebrates the experiences, contributions, and perspectives of individuals who hold protected characteristics.
- 8.3.2. **Why:** Constantly reviewing and adapting the curriculum ensures it remains inclusive, representative, and relevant. It promotes understanding, respect, and appreciation of diversity, challenges stereotypes, and prepares students for life in a multicultural society. Celebrating diverse contributions fosters equality, empowering all students to feel valued and included in their education.

8.3.3. **How will impact be measured:** Internal and external quality assurance of the curriculum; student outcomes; behaviour data; attendance; and student voice.

#### 8.4. Objective 4

8.4.1. **What:** To establish focus groups that engage and support students and parent carers with protected characteristics to provide a platform for peer-to-peer support, collaboration, feedback, and guidance to inform inclusive policies, practices, and initiatives within the school community.

8.4.2. **Why:** Establishing focus groups for students and parent carers with protected characteristics provides a psychologically safe space for collaboration and empowerment. It creates an opportunity to share experiences, offer feedback, and shape inclusive policies and practices, ensuring the school meets diverse needs and promotes equality across the community.

8.4.3. **How will impact be measured:** Establish focus groups for students and parent carers and track the participation rates of these groups; gather qualitative feedback from focus groups; assess improvements in inclusivity perceptions through staff and student voice, document any policy changes informed by feedback from focus groups.

#### 8.5. Objective 5

8.5.1. **What:** To provide ongoing professional development for staff that develops inclusive practices, enhances understanding of equality and diversity, and equips staff to effectively support and engage all students, therefore ensuring a positive and equitable learning environment for the entire school community.

8.5.2. **Why:** Professional development is crucial in improving equality, diversity, and inclusion because it equips staff with the knowledge and skills to recognise and address biases, create inclusive learning environments, and support the diverse needs of students. It ensures that staff are proactive in fostering respect, equity, and understanding, leading to better outcomes for all students.

8.5.3. **How will impact be measured:** Gather staff feedback from training sessions; observe inclusive practice in classrooms through StepLab drop-ins; collate student and parent carer voice to monitor shifts in school culture and climate in relation to equity and inclusion.

### 9. Monitoring Arrangements

9.1. We recognise that the action resulting from a policy statement such as this is what makes a difference.

9.2. Accordingly, we will draw up an action plan, setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify consider national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

9.3. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them. The annual reports can be found in the equalities page of the school's website.

9.4. We collate, study, and use both qualitative and quantitative evidence relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate. We collect, analyse and use data on achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnicity, and gender.

## **10. Breaches of the Policy**

10.1. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and the Trust Board.

## **11. Links with other policies**

11.1. This document links to the following policies:

- 11.1.1. Access Plan 2024-2028
- 11.1.2. Admissions Policy
- 11.1.3. Anti-Bullying Policy
- 11.1.4. Behaviour Policy
- 11.1.5. Dignity at Work Policy
- 11.1.6. Disciplinary Policy
- 11.1.7. Equal Opportunities Policy
- 11.1.8. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- 11.1.9. SEND Information Report
- 11.1.10. SEND Policy