

# Equal Opportunities Policy

Approved by RET Board

Approved on March 2025

RET contact Headteacher

Revision due Every 2 years



Consulted on with recognised trade unions and adopted by Trust following consultation.

## 1. Aims

- a. RET and our schools are fully committed to meeting our obligations under the public sector equality duty having due regard to the need to:
  1. Eliminate discrimination 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 characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
  4. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Throughout this policy the legally protected characteristics are referred to as “the characteristics”. In addition
    - RET has Public Sector Equality Duty (arising from a provision of the Equality Act) to consider all its actions and decisions in relation to impact on people with protected characteristics.
    - RET has duties (also arising from the Equality Act – Section 5 - Work) to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and victimisation
    - RET and its schools aim to ensure equality of opportunity for students regardless of socio-economic status.
- b. Accordingly, we are committed to:
  - Providing an appropriate learning experience, in an environment free of prejudice and harassment, for all students regardless of these characteristics.
  - Treating all staff and students equally according to the law.
  - Educating all students and staff against any form of prejudice, harassment or stereotyping.
  - Developing policies and procedures that will lead to high standards from all staff and students.

## 2. Education

- a. Policy Statement

RET is committed to equal opportunities in education and employment and will not discriminate against anyone who is at, or applying to, its schools on the grounds of “the characteristics”.
- b. This policy embraces the following areas:
  1. **Admissions**
    - A copy of the admissions policy is available from our schools or on their websites.
  2. **The Curriculum**
    - RET aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all students, with timetabling designed to support the widest possible access to the range of subjects available. The school will take all reasonable measures to ensure that all students will have equal access to this curriculum. Where appropriate and practicable, curricular arrangements may be adjusted to reflect students’ individual needs. The curriculum will actively seek to identify and educate to combat harassment and prejudice. Sex and Relationships education will be used to help combat sexual harassment, encourage healthy consensual relationships and raise awareness of the dangers of children’s exposure to pornography and the inappropriate use of social media.
  3. **Special educational needs**
    - RET is committed to supporting all students, whatever their individual circumstances, difficulties or needs, and to ensure that full access to the curriculum is extended to all. Schools will work with students, parents/carers and any other professionals to ensure the best possible educational experience for the student.
  4. **Religious studies and observance**

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- Our policy is that religious studies should be accessible to all students. However, students may be excused from all or part of the programme at the written request of parents /carers.
5. We seek to make appropriate arrangements to reflect the requirements of different religious faiths regarding acceptable variations to school uniform, catering arrangements and authorised absence for religious festivals falling during term time. These may include reasonable arrangements to allow for specific acts of religious observance in school.
6. **Disability and access**
- We will seek to deal with the individual needs of all students and prospective students with disabilities as far as reasonably practicable.
  - We will ensure statutory requirements regarding access for the disabled to new buildings are met. The accessibility plan sets out a structured programme to increase access to its facilities.
  - Where students have physical and/or learning disabilities, the school will ensure that reasonable and practical arrangements are made to ensure that disabled students can gain access to the curriculum and that the school works effectively with local services and agencies to provide appropriate and coherent support.
7. **Pregnancy**
- The school will seek to support students who are pregnant, working with parents /carers and other professionals (such as doctors or midwives, or social workers) to help the student to continue with her education as far as possible. An Individual Educational Plan will be drawn up and appropriate work provided if she is unable to attend school. If possible and where this is practical, the student will be entered for exams and helped to continue with her education after the birth of her child.
8. **Stereotyping**
- The school will ensure that:
- All members of the school community are treated equally, regardless of “the characteristics”.
  - Understanding and tolerance of all these issues are promoted.
  - Guidance is given on subject choices and careers encouraging students to consider non-stereotypical opportunities.
  - Stereotyping is considered when planning all aspects of the curriculum and provision.
  - Account is taken of positive role models when inviting speakers and representatives into the school and in the promotion of specific initiatives.
9. **Minority Ethnic Groups, including Refugees**
- The school will ensure that:
- Home-school links are made to involve parents directly in the life and work of the school.
  - Linguistic diversity is positively recognised and, where appropriate, interpretation and translation services are made available as quickly as possible.
  - Links are established with local community groups.
  - Staff work effectively with other local services.
  - Learning support for ethnic minority students is efficient and effective.
  - Provision is made for the spiritual, moral, and social and cultural education, supported by appropriate resources and information.
  - Student/students’ names will be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced.
  - All students will be actively encouraged to accept and respect cultures other than their own.
10. **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children**
- The school aims to ensure successful integration of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children through:
- Where necessary, distance learning packs are provided to support continuous learning.
  - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children with special educational needs receive appropriate support.
  - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultures are affirmed to share and broaden experiences for all students.

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## 11. Other policies

Other policies are required to reflect equal opportunities issues.

## 12. Complaints

- Any parent who is not satisfied that our school policies have been properly applied may make a complaint in accordance with the school's formal complaints procedure.
- Students should be made aware of the mechanisms available to them within school to raise matters of concern of an academic or pastoral nature.

## 3. RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

### a. Policy Statement

1. The school is committed to equal opportunities in the recruitment and employment of staff and volunteers.
2. It aims to ensure that all employees and volunteers are recruited, trained and promoted based on ability, the requirements of the job and relevant and objective criteria.
3. The school will not unlawfully discriminate against any employee, job applicant or volunteer on the grounds of "the characteristics" in any matters to do with recruitment and employment.

### b. This policy embraces the following areas:

#### 1. Recruitment and promotion

- All posts are advertised, either internally or externally as appropriate.
- Vacancies for headteacher and deputy headteachers are usually advertised nationally.
- Recruitment is based on matching skills, qualifications and experience with a person specification for the post in accordance with recommended best practice for ensuring equality of opportunity in employment.

#### 2. Recruitment and employment of ex-offenders

- Many posts involve substantial opportunity for unsupervised access to children and are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974. Applicants are therefore required to declare any criminal convictions, including those normally regarded as "spent" under the Act. All candidates offered an appointment to an exempt post are required to obtain an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed, which will include details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings as well as convictions.
- All other posts fall into the category of "regulated positions" as defined in the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2000, and all candidates offered an appointment are required to obtain a Standard Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed.
- If the Disclosure reveals a criminal record or other information of concern, this will be discussed with the candidate before a decision is made whether to confirm the offer of employment. In making this decision, the school will consider the nature of the offence and whether this makes the applicant unsuitable for the type of work to be undertaken or unacceptable to other employees, how long ago the offence was committed and the age of the prospective employee at that time, together with any other factors that may be relevant.

#### 3. Access to training and development

- Training and development opportunities are available to all staff as appropriate, and all staff are entitled to an annual review interview. All newly qualified teachers are provided with an appropriate induction training programme in accordance with national guidelines.

#### 4. Disability and access for the disabled

- The school will make reasonable adjustments to arrangements for applicants with disabilities to attend interview. The needs of employees with disabilities will be met whenever reasonably practicable.
- Statutory requirements regarding access for the disabled to new buildings are met. The accessibility plan sets out a structured programme to increase access to its facilities.

#### 5. Complaints

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- Any member of staff who is not satisfied that the above policies have been properly applied may make a complaint in accordance with the grievance procedure, which complies with statutory requirements.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

### a. The role of the school governing body is to:

- Monitor the implementation of the policies.
- Review annually the school's policies and arrangements to ensure equal opportunities.
- Ensure that equal opportunities policies are appropriately implemented.
- Ensure that parents and members of the community are involved in reviewing equal opportunities policies as appropriate.
- Monitor the development of the Disability Accessibility Plan.
- Welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.
- Ensure that no member of the school community is discriminated against on account of their "characteristics".
- Regularly check the school's records of discriminatory incidents and the outcomes.
- Nominate a member as designated link for Equal Opportunities to liaise with the headteacher.

### b. The role of the headteacher is to:

- Implement the relevant equal opportunities policies.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers and support staff apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- Ensure that the equal opportunities policies are applied to all staff recruitment procedures, by all those involved in the selection, appointment and development of staff.
- Ensure that the equal opportunities policies are taken account of in pay, performance management, promotion and training matters.
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life (for example, in assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school).
- Report as required to the governing body.

### c. Teachers

#### 1. Teachers will:

- Familiarise themselves with this Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Know what their responsibilities are to ensure that the policy is implemented.
- Know the implications of the equal opportunities policies for their planning, teaching and learning strategies as well as for managing behavioural issues.
- Support staff will familiarise themselves with this policy and know what their responsibilities are in ensuring that it is implemented.

### d. Students

#### 1. Students will:

- Be made aware of how the equality policy applies to them.
- Learn to treat each other with respect.
- Be prepared to raise issues involving harassment or discrimination with a member of staff, or another adult as appropriate.

### e. Parents and members of the Community

- #### 1. Parents and appropriate members of the community will be involved in the development and monitoring of equality policies, where relevant, and any programmes generated by them under arrangements drawn up by the headteacher and agreed by the governing body.

## 5. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- ### a. The headteacher will report to the governing body on the working of the policy regularly.

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- Government legislation states that this can be a brief 'summary report' which is incorporated into another strategic document.
- b. The governing body will review the working of the school's policy annually and will review the policy itself at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.
- c. The policy will be actively promoted and implemented throughout the school.
- d. The school policy will be placed on the website and brought to the attention of parents/carers through the headteacher's newsletter.