

SHIRLEY HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS COLLEGE

Community Cohesion and Single Equalities Policy (including Equalities Statement)

Mission Statement: We deliver high quality teaching and learning in an environment that meets the needs of our students so that all achieve and enjoy.

Definitions

A cohesive community may be defined as one where:

“There is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country.”

Developing the Equalities Agenda, 2008

Community cohesion therefore means working towards a society in which:

- there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities
- the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued
- similar life opportunities are available to all
- strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community

For Shirley High School, the term “community” has a number of dimensions including:

- the school community – the children and young people we serve, their parents, carers and families, the school’s staff and governing body, and community users of the school’s facilities and services
- the community within which the school is located – the school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in that area, including not just to the immediate neighbourhood but also the Croydon Local Authority area via the wide range of joint and partnership work undertaken with local service providers
- the UK community – our school is by definition part of this community
- the global community – formed by EU and international links

Shirley High School has also contributed to the creation of its own communities – for example:

- working collaboratively with other educational providers by providing services for the local community
- by organising activities for the immediate, local and wider communities

Equalities statement

- 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 (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief 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 that inform our practice:

In fulfilling the legal obligations, we are guided by five 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

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, and 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

Our policies, procedures and activities 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 or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual or homophobic harassment.

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

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example, in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional 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

We engage with groups and individuals, to ensure that those who are affected by policy or activity are consulted. 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 already exist between:

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

Methodology

- We maintain and publish qualitative information showing our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues as appropriate. We regularly review our equality objectives and report annually on progress towards achieving them.
- We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the guiding principles.
- We ensure that the guiding principles apply to the full range of policies and practices, including those concerned with:
 - students' progress, attainment and achievement
 - students' 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
 - working with the wider community

This will be achieved through:

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – helping children and young people to learn to understand others, to value diversity whilst also promoting shared values, to promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action – for example through the new “Identity and Diversity: living together in the UK” strand within citizenship education
- Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible, striving to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and working to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups
- Engagement and extended services – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including: links with different schools and communities; the provision of extended services; and opportunities for students, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups
- Local community support – the school supports and encourages school admissions from the immediate community. Relations with local residents are strengthened by positive interaction between staff, school governors and safer neighbourhood officers.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and related procedures and action plans are implemented.

The Principal 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 cases of unlawful discrimination.

The Senior Vice Principal - Pastoral has day to day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy.

All staff are expected to:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- Deal with any prejudice related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver a curriculum that reflects the guiding principles
- Support students for whom English is an additional language
- Keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

Links with other policies

The Community Cohesion and Single Equalities Policy (including Equalities Statement) links with the following policies which can be read in conjunction:

- Behaviour Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Learning and Teaching Policy
- Spiritual and Personal Development Policy (inc. PSHEE)
- Collective Worship Policy
- School Values and Ethos Information (displayed around school and on school website)

Evaluation and Monitoring

This policy is a dynamic document and will be updated as new guidance is produced or, in response to research, review or other events that have not previously been covered in depth.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Dealing with Prejudice Related Incidents

Appendix B: Equality Objectives 2018-19 (reviewed annually)

APPENDIX A

DEALING WITH PREJUDICE RELATED INCIDENTS

Prejudice will not be tolerated at Shirley High School Performing Arts College. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling our legal duties. This includes:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- Prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities e.g. anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia

Clear procedures are in place and outlined below to ensure prejudice related incidents, discrimination and harassment are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently. All prejudice related incidents will be recorded.

The named member of staff for Prejudice Related Incidents is Ms M Francis (Senior Vice Principal - Pastoral)

Definition:

A prejudice related incident is any incident which is so perceived by the victim, or any other person.

NB:

- Although an incident is alleged or perceived to be prejudice related it does not necessarily mean that it is. It must still, however, be recorded and an investigation must be carried out.
- Whether or not the offender intended their behaviour to be prejudiced is irrelevant. Although the offender's intentions are an important consideration in the investigation, their attitudes, motivation and awareness are not the main issue initially.

Categories of Prejudice Related Incidents:

1. Incidents involving Physical Abuse

- Physical assault against a person or group because of disability, special educational needs, colour, race and/or ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation.
- Prejudice related damage to personal property.

2. Incidents involving Verbal/Written Abuse

- Intimidation and threats
- Verbal abuse, name calling, prejudiced jokes
- Insulting behaviour or gestures
- Ridicule of an individual for perceived differences
- Prejudice related comments during class discussions.
- Refusal to co-operate with other students because of their disability, special educational needs, colour, race and/or ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation
- Abusive comments in letters/emails/written work/internet/texts
- Prejudice related graffiti

3. Incitement (Incidents seeking the support of others in Prejudice Related Behaviour)

- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia.
- Bringing racist materials such as leaflets, comics, magazines or computer software into school.
- Using the school's computer systems to access and distribute racist materials.
- Attempt to recruit pupils and students to racist organisations and groups.

Procedure to deal with incidents:

In all cases, whatever the nature of the complaint:

- Red card to be completed and forwarded to the respective Middle Leader.
- Investigation will be undertaken (details to be clarified; area of the complaint to be made clear; victim(s), aggressor(s) and witness(es) to be questioned and their statements attached. Clarity is needed as to why harassment is perceived as such).
- Red card, with investigation details and statements attached, to be passed onto Ms M Francis (Senior Vice Principal - Pastoral)
- Ms M Francis (Senior Vice Principal - Pastoral) will discuss the investigation with the victim and aggressor;
- The appropriate sanctions / restorative approaches will be applied.

Schools will be most effective in managing and responding to prejudice related incidents where;

- Clear, well-defined procedures for preventing and responding to prejudice related incidents are an integral part of the schools community cohesion policy, which has been drawn up in consultation with staff, governors, parents/carers and students.
- Clear well-defined procedures for responding to incidents are integral to the schools systems for managing behaviour and providing pastoral care and support.
- Sanctions are applied appropriately in line with the schools behaviour policy and procedures.
- All staff have received training in responding to prejudice related incidents and follow the correct procedures for reporting incidents.
- An identified senior leader has overall responsibility. This responsibility includes:
 - ensuring that all incidents are recorded consistently;
 - ensuring that in all serious incidents the Safer Schools Police Team are contacted;
 - ensuring incidents are fully investigated and appropriate action is taken including parental contact;
 - monitoring and reviewing patterns of incidents and taking appropriate action;
 - Reporting to Governors as appropriate.
- Students have been involved in reviewing the procedures for responding to prejudice related incidents.
- All students are made aware of the procedures for reporting incidents and who they can report incidents to.
- New staff are made aware of the procedures as part of their induction to the school.
- Parents/carers are made aware of and have access to the school's policy and procedures.

Incidents involving Students:

Support and intervention for victims and perpetrators will be most effective when:

- As part of the intervention, work is carried out with both the victim and the perpetrator:
 - the victim should be provided with immediate support and reassurance that the incident will be taken seriously, fully investigated and appropriate action taken in line with established school procedures.
 - the victim should be given every opportunity to express his/her concerns and feelings.
 - the victim is kept informed of the outcome of the incident reported.
 - the views of the victim should be taken into careful consideration when deciding the action to take.
 - the perpetrator understands and takes responsibility for the impact of their behaviour on the victim and the hurt and damage the incident may have caused.
 - the perpetrator is supported in understanding why prejudice related incidents are so serious.
 - the perpetrator is provided with opportunities for exploring the underlying attitudes and values that have led to the incident

- A restorative approach is used where appropriate to provide an opportunity for the victim to explain their feelings, the perpetrator to apologise and for reconciliation to be achieved. However, the victim must feel safe and confident with this approach.
- Both victims and perpetrators are made aware of the serious nature of the incident, of the unacceptable nature of the behaviour and the reasons for this.
- The parents/carers of both victims and perpetrators are informed of the incident, the action taken by the school and the reasons for that action, on the day of the incident, where possible.
- Where appropriate, parents/carers are involved in the resolution of the incident and/or the follow up action.
- Where appropriate, follow up action includes work with a wider group of students who may have witnessed the incident to stress the unacceptable nature of the incident and the action taken.

The flow chart below gives further advice to staff as how best to support the victim at the stage of the initial interview.

Listen attentively to what the student is saying, and acknowledge their feelings.



Create an environment in which the student feels comfortable and able to talk openly to you, be clear that you do not accept or collude with prejudice related comments. Do not deflect their concerns; give truthful and honest explanations.



Make the student feel valued, and reassure him or her that the prejudice related incident will be taken seriously.



Where appropriate help the student feel positive by using positive words to make them feel good about themselves.

Incidents involving Staff:

- In incidents involving staff the schools normal procedures for investigating incidents, including disciplinary procedures, should be used. School staff may also wish to seek the support of their professional associations.

Incidents involving Visitors/ family members to the School:

- Where visitors/ family members are perpetrators of prejudice related incidents the school should affirm that such incidents are not acceptable and, where appropriate, ask the people involved to leave the school premises.
- Support from the police should be sought if required.

APPENDIX B

EQUALITY DUTIES

The school is legally required to publish information demonstrating how we comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and prepare and publish equality objectives.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equalities Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
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Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty is evident in the following published policies:

- Behaviour policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Inclusion Policy (including School Accessibility Plan)
- Spiritual and Personal Development Policy
- Learning and Teaching Policy
- Staff Pay Policies
- Lettings of School Premises Policy

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2018-19

Equality objectives should be:

- specific measurable and outcome focused
- be related to matters highlighted in the information the school publishes to demonstrate compliance with the general duty to have due regard for equalities
- integrated with the School Improvement Plan

The School Equality Objectives for 2018-2019 are as follows:

- To promote our Golden Rule and British Values to ensure understanding and awareness of all groups identified in the Equalities Act 2010.
- To promote the involvement of all groups of students in the extra-curricular life of the school, including leadership opportunities.
- To close gaps in attainment and achievement between students and all groups of students; especially boys and girls, students eligible for free-school meals, students with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children, students from different ethnic groups and those for whom English is not their first language.
- To further improve accessibility across the school for students, staff and visitors with disabilities, including access to specialist teaching areas.