



COMMUNITY EQUALITY POLICY

Teaching and Learning

Committee responsible: School Life Sub Committee (AM)

Reviewed by: Head of Junior School

Adopted by Committee: May 2009

Last reviewed: May 2024

Date of next review: May 2027

Policy Statement

At Sibford School we are guided by the Quaker Equality Testimony: Quakers believe in the equal worth and unique nature of every person. We also try to live out the Quaker belief that ‘there is that of God in everyone’. This is also reflected in our curriculum and our pedagogy which seeks to enable students to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills throughout their school career.

Furthermore, Sibford School is committed to developing policies, practices and procedures which promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices.

Sibford School Community Equality Policy applies to Sibford Senior School, both day and boarding, and Sibford Junior School, including our Early Years Foundation Stage. The procedures described comply with the Equality Act 2010; the Independent Schools Standards Regulations (The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations, also known as the registration standards or ISSRs; the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (made under section 87 of the Children Act 1989 (NMS) and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). These regulations are laid down by the Department for Education.

In principle, as a community, we do not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of the following nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, citizenship and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

In accordance with, and beyond the requirements of these regulations, Sibford School makes policies available to parents and prospective parents on the public area of the school’s website: www.sibfordschool.co.uk

Sibford School aims to nurture those qualities perceived to represent that of God in everyone by maintaining a culture in which all in the community can be themselves and develop confidence, self-esteem and tolerance. We wish to encourage and maintain a culture in which all members of the school community can be themselves, and develop confidence, self-esteem and tolerance by ensuring a secure setting in which they feel valued and respected. We aim:

- to enable every pupil to recognise and acknowledge his or her individual talents and to help each one realise his or her full potential.
- to meet the needs of our pupils, be they educational or pastoral.
- to provide our pupils with a thirst for lifelong learning and an active concern for their immediate environment and the wider community.
- to welcome parents into a partnership embracing trust, understanding and mutual support.
- Sibford School stands against all forms of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation;

Aims of Community Equality Policy:

- to promote justice, equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all
- to establish an environment which is effective in reducing prejudice and raising self esteem
- to provide a safe and welcoming place for all members of its community
- to provide a curriculum which challenges prejudiced attitudes, assumptions and behaviour
- to contribute towards instilling a sense of citizenship in the pupils
- to ensure regular reviews of the effectiveness of the policy in line with the school's policy review cycle

The staff of Sibford School, supported by School Committee, will ensure that it opposes discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity in every area of school life, and in so doing follow its legal responsibilities as laid down in current legislation and associated codes of practice:

Action to Implement Policy

It is the aim of the school to ensure that opportunities and facilities are available to everyone who studies or works in the school:

- ◆ We will ensure that the educational needs of all pupils are properly assessed.
- ◆ We will identify those barriers (physical, environmental and curricular) which could prevent individuals from accessing the learning opportunities the school provides, and seek to remove them, making reasonable adjustment through our best endeavours to promote inclusion.

- ◆ We will seek to provide a supportive and welcoming atmosphere.
- ◆ We will develop effective support systems and monitor their effectiveness.
- ◆ We will employ a range of teaching styles to ensure no pupil is excluded from learning and to enable pupils to achieve success.
- ◆ We will challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices directly. This might involve quiet conversations with individuals, speaking with groups of children, broader messages through Meeting for Worship, letters home to parents or the use of disciplinary sanctions.
- ◆ We will model positive behaviours to demonstrate our commitment to equality of opportunity.

All members of the school community have personal responsibility for the ongoing, practical application of the Community Equality Policy.

The school interacts with numerous other organisations, groups and individuals. It is important that the school ethos with regard to equality issues extends across all areas of its work. Therefore:

- ◆ We will make use of opportunities to promote the principle of equality of opportunity.
- ◆ We will celebrate diversity and difference.
- ◆ We will promote the interests of disadvantaged groups to others.

The policy will be implemented through the school's strategic plan and related departmental and pastoral team plans. The policy will be monitored and reviewed in accordance with the school's policy review cycle.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure the policy is carried through effectively and should give active support to the policy. They should encourage pupils and colleagues to report any instances of discrimination. The school takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that any instances of discrimination are investigated fully, and appropriate, sensitive and responsive action is taken. In the case of pupils and staff this could involve the school's disciplinary procedures.

The Curriculum

The curriculum will reflect the commitment of the school to the principle of equality of opportunity.

The curriculum encompasses:

- ◆ Needs assessment
- ◆ Subject content and resources for learning
- ◆ Pupil-centred teaching and learning
- ◆ Assessment of pupils
- ◆ Recording of achievement
- ◆ Evaluation of provision

Admissions procedures, timetabling and rooming systems will be reviewed to ensure that as far as possible no pupil is disadvantaged because of disabilities or special needs.

Teaching and learning styles will be employed which are in keeping with the ethos of equality of opportunity.

Staff are expected to be sensitive to the needs of all pupils. The school will provide individual support for learning as appropriate to pupil need.

The school will employ reporting and reviewing procedures for the assessment of the learning needs and achievements of all pupils.

Teaching staff will monitor and evaluate teaching and learning materials to ensure that they are free from racist, sexist and other discriminatory assumptions, images and language. In areas where this is difficult to achieve, for example in the use of the internet or in the study of art, media and literature, staff should be careful to place the material in its cultural and historical context.

Staff involved with community work or work placement organisations should be aware of equal opportunity issues in the environment or work place used by the pupils.

Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that staff in their teaching teams are monitoring and reviewing equal opportunities issues in their curriculum area.

Members of School Committee are expected to demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the principle of equality of opportunity

Marketing and Publicity

All school publicity material will reflect the principle of equality of opportunity. Publicity material will be monitored in relation to the Community Equality Policy. Publicity material will reflect the school's commitment to be responsive to individual learning needs of pupils.

Codes of Practice

The school is committed to ensuring the implementation of its equal opportunities policy.

The school will utilise appropriate practices and procedures in relation to:

Pupil behaviour

- ◆ the pupil code of conduct will be used to make all students aware of their rights and responsibilities, and of their obligations to respect others and behave in a way which acknowledges the equal rights of all pupils to have access to and benefit from everything that Sibford can offer.

Training and staff development

- ◆ staff development will underpin the Community Equality Policy and raise awareness of equal opportunities issues.

Appointment of staff

- ◆ Appointments of teaching and associate staff will be made in accordance with our Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy, which is underpinned by equal opportunities

Agenda setting

- ◆ equal opportunities matters will influence the agenda setting of meetings across the school

The member of staff with responsibility for equality of opportunities is Toby Spence, Head.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the SEND Policy, Behaviour (Policy, Social Respect Policy, Assessment Policy and the published (see website) programmes of study for Personal Social and Health Education.

Parents, staff, pupils or visitors to the school who feel that we have fallen short of our commitment to Equal Opportunities should raise the matter with the Head, or with the Clerk of School Committee (Chair of Governors), or should follow the procedures laid out in our Complaints Policy.

Please also refer to the following policies as relevant:

SEND and Equality Policy; Accessibility Plan; Admissions Policy; Complaints Policy; Equal Opportunities (Employment) and Dignity at Work Policy; Social Respect Policy and Assessment Policy.