

Policy Title:	Equality Policy
Function:	For information and Guidance and incorporating the School's vision and core values. It forms part of the portfolio of policies designed to keep students safe, happy and cared for and to ensure equality of opportunity for all staff and students. Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)
Status:	Statutory
Audience:	Governors, Principal, Teachers, Support Staff, Local Authority, Students, their Parents and Carers.
Ownership/Implementation	The Principal and the Governing Body have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented at Compass School Southwark.
Version:	1.1
Implementation Date:	January 2015
Review Period:	Annually
Last Reviewed:	Under review

The General Duty

The Equality Act 2010 (EqA) introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (sometimes also referred to as the 'general duty') that applies to public bodies, including maintained schools and Academies.

The previous separate three equality duties (covering issues of gender, race and disability) are combined, and the scope of the duty extended to additional *protected characteristics*. The characteristics protected under the EqA are:-

- Race
- Disability
- Sex
- Age
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Gender Reassignment
- Marital or Civil Partnership Status

The School is subject to the need to have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act: by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations between those with a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

All the above apply to the first 8 protected characteristics. The final characteristic of marital/civil partnership status is only covered by point 1 above.

Compliance with the PSED may involve the School in treating some people more favourably than others, but the School will not take steps prohibited by or under the EqA.

Having "due regard"

Having "due regard" means giving relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty.

- Decision makers in the School will be aware of the duty to have "due regard" when making a decision or taking an action and must assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.
- The School will consider equality implications before and at the time that it develops policy and takes decisions, and not as an afterthought. The School will keep them under review on a continuing basis.
- The PSED will be integrated into the carrying out of the School's functions, and the School will analyse the relevant information seriously, rigorously and with an open mind, to ensure that the School is complying with the PSED.
- The School will not delegate responsibility for carrying out the duty to external organisations.

The School will ensure that, whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought is given to the equality implications.

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act: by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.

Attainment data which shows how students with different characteristics (eg boys or girls) are performing will obviously be relevant here, in particular in helping to identify whether there are areas of inequality which may need to be addressed. RAISE online contains much detailed analysis by relevant characteristics.

This can involve:-

- a) Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have. *For example, disabled students, or gay students who are being subjected to homophobic bullying.*
- b) Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic. *For example enabling Muslim students to pray at prescribed times.*
- c) Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities. *For example encouraging both boys and girls, and students from different ethnic backgrounds, to be involved in the full range of school societies.*

2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

This involves having due regard to the needs to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The School will analyse the available data and publish information about the steps it has taken in response. After an appropriate period, the School will also publish data about the changes as a result of the steps taken.

3. Foster good relations between those with a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The School prides itself on fostering good relations in many things which it does as a matter of course, including within the curriculum, the behaviour and anti-bullying policies, assemblies dealing with relevant issues, involvement with the local communities, twinning arrangements with other schools which enable students to meet and exchange experiences with children from different backgrounds, or initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of students within the School itself.

Specific Duties

The specific duties on the School are:

Source: Compass School Southwark

- to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and
- to prepare and publish the School's Equality Objectives.

The School will update the published information at least annually and publish objectives at least once every four years.

The roles and responsibilities related to the Equality Plan are included in Appendix A.

As the School has fewer than 150 employees, it is not required to publish data about employees. However, the School may make public some employee-related statistics if this would demonstrate that it is complying with the General Duty, subject to the School's obligations under the DPA.

The School is obliged to publish student-related data but will take all reasonable steps to ensure that individuals are not able to be identified through the publication of data. In line with DfE practice, the School will not generally publish information which relates to fewer than 3 [students **OR** people (School staff or students)].

To demonstrate compliance with the General Duty the School publishes the following information:-

- statistical data
- place the School's policies on Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Equal Opportunities, Pay & Recruitment on its website
- place minutes of Governors' meetings on its website
- Equality schemes in relation to specified protected characteristics
- Details of staff training on the Equality Act

Actions Taken

In developing the plan we have been able to identify and record the progress we have made towards achieving equality and tackling discrimination and come to a better understanding of the challenges still to be addressed. We will ensure that this Equalities Policy is effectively implemented and scrutinised so that we meet the obligations placed upon us by the Equality Duty.

Promoting the priorities identified within the Equalities Policy will be a continuous process. The current Equalities Objectives have been formulated in partnership with the School's community through a two week staff consultation period.

Our School, has considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected equality groups. Using the information we have gathered we have decided upon our equality objectives. Our plan to meet these objectives will be monitored annually.

In compiling this equality information we have:

- Reviewed the schools equality data, policies and practice and identified gaps
- Examined how the School engages with the protected groups, identifying where practice could be improved.

Appendix A Roles and Responsibilities

Governors:

A named governor will take the lead; the governors as a whole are responsible for:

- Making sure the School complies with the relevant equality legislation
- Monitoring progress towards the equality objectives and reporting annually.

The Principal will:

- Implement the School's stated equality objectives
- Ensure the equality objectives and access plans are written, and that they are readily available to governors, staff, students and parents
- Ensure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- Take appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including prejudice-related incidents
- Enable reasonable adjustments to be made in relation to disability in regard to students, staff, parents/carers and visitors to the school.

All staff within the School will:

- Advance equality in their work
- Foster good relations between groups and deal with prejudice-related incidents
- Be able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- Take up training and learning opportunities.

Visitors and contractors are also responsible for following relevant School policies.

Appendix B

Protected characteristics: definitions

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18-30 year olds).

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Further guidance www.gires.org.uk/mglossary.php

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristics of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live it to be included in the definition.

Sex: A man or a woman.

Sexual orientation – protected whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.