

Sawston Village College

A Policy on Equality

Introduction

The overall objective of the school's Equality Policy is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

Through the Equality Policy, the school seeks to ensure that no member of the school community or any other person through their contact with the school receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependants, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, where the person lives or spent convictions.

The principles of this policy apply to all members of the extended school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents and members of the local community.

It sets out:

- ❑ the school's context;
- ❑ its aims and values;
- ❑ its overall approach to promoting equality, community cohesion, recognising and celebrating diversity and tackling discrimination;
- ❑ specific reference to community cohesion, race equality, disability equality, gender equality;
- ❑ roles and responsibilities;
- ❑ monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact.

The school's context

Sawston Village College is a mixed 11-16 comprehensive foundation school situated 6 miles south of Cambridge with more than 1000 learners on roll. Prior attainment is slightly above the national average for maintained mainstream schools, 7% of pupils qualify for membership of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth. 5.6% of pupils are eligible for free school meals.

The number of pupils living in overcrowded households as determined by ward, while still below the national average, can vary between 2.8% to 9.3%, reflecting a wide spectrum of social and economic background.

On average 34% of adults have attended higher education within those wards which provide the school population, though this figure is lower in the village of Sawston (18.4%) and below the average for England.

19% of pupils were identified as having special educational needs, including 3% with statements.

The overwhelming majority of pupils are white British, although nearly three percent are classified as being from other white backgrounds.

The number of pupils whose first language is not English is slightly above the national average; these tend to come from other European countries. As a Language College, however, the school is committed to the study and celebration of linguistic diversity.

The pupil gender balance is roughly 55% / 45% boys to girls. For teaching staff it is 60% / 40% men to women; only 15% of support staff are male.

Aims and values

Statement of shared values

Sawston Village College regards each member of the school community as a valuable individual, regardless of race, social background, gender or ability.

Good relationships lie at the heart of a good school and support each individual to do his or her best academically and personally. **Fairness, trust** and **mutual respect** are essential to creating an encouraging and positive community.

All members of the school community have the **right to be safe**, cared for and supported.

Learning is a **partnership** of pupils, parents and school. It can only take place in a calm, ordered environment.

All members of the school community have joint responsibility for the **success** of the school and its pupils and for building trust and a positive relationship between the College and its wider community.

Working together, staff and pupils, we aim to develop a **culture of excellence** within the College.

The school's overall approach

Teaching, learning and curriculum

The school aims to teach pupils to understand others, to promote common values and to value diversity, to promote awareness of human rights and of the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.

1. Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all contributions are valued. Where groups or individuals are marginalised, the teacher takes positive steps to include them.
2. Teachers undertake to ensure that they are aware of the language abilities and needs of all their pupils.
3. Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles and takes account of their experiences and starting points, in order to engage all pupils.

4. Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender and background.
5. Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. All pupils are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.
6. Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning.
7. Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.
8. Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.
9. Citizenship is taught as a discrete course, but also permeates the work of the school both within and outside the curriculum.

Equity and excellence

The school aims to ensure equal opportunity for all to succeed at the highest level possible, removing barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.

1. Any pattern of underachievement of a particular group is addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.
2. The school ensures, where possible, that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias. Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils.
3. Staff have very high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to reach higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.
4. Self-assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress.

Engagement and extended services

The school aims to provide a means for children, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different schools and communities locally, across the country and internationally.

1. The school is fully comprehensive and proud of its inclusive and cohesive

school community where all members are tolerant of difference.

2. The school's links with a local secondary and both secondary schools' partner primary schools support broader community awareness.
3. The locality schools pool funding to support vulnerable children, young people and their families through family support.
4. Pupils have regular access to trips locally, nationally and internationally.
5. The school's Language College status additionally supports foreign contact Electronically, via Language Assistants and visits by foreign pupils and teachers.

Community cohesion

In order to maintain **a cohesive community**, the school aims to

- encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community;
 - understand the needs and hopes of all its communities;
 - tackle discrimination;
 - increase life opportunities for all;
 - ensure teaching and the curriculum explore and address issues of diversity.
1. The school sits at the centre of its local community, offering education to young people in the age range 11 -16 and to adults through its partnership with a neighbouring secondary school.
 2. Its Community Sports Centre has close to 1,000 members and caters also for people referred because of ill health through the GP Referral Scheme.
 3. The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.
 4. Through its partnership with 14 schools, the school is able to provide support for vulnerable children, young people and their families.
 5. Opportunities Without Limits (OWL) is situated on the school site and caters for those with learning disabilities.
 6. Within the curriculum and outside it, pupils have the opportunity to learn about other cultures, countries and religions.
 7. Parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.
 8. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.
 9. Progress reports to parents/carers are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents/carers have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue about the young people's learning.

10. The school works in partnership with parents and the community to address specific incidents and to develop positive attitudes to difference.

Race equality

The school's commitment to race equality includes:

- ensuring that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve their potential;
- respecting and valuing differences between people;
- preparing pupils for life in a diverse society;
- making the school a place where everyone, taking account of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, feels welcomed and valued;
- promoting good relations between different racial and cultural groups within the school and within the wider community;
- ensuring that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained;
- acknowledging the existence of racism and taking steps to prevent it;
- opposing all forms of racism, racial prejudice and racial harassment;
- being proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Disability Equality

The school aims to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability and Discrimination Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life;
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

The school's **Disability Equality Scheme** demonstrates how the school intends to fulfil its general and specific duties and outlines those involved in the development of the scheme.

The scheme is reported annually to governors and reviewed and revised every three years.

Gender Equality

The school aims to:

- eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment;
- to promote equality of opportunity between males and females.

The school's **Gender Equality Scheme** demonstrates how the school intends to fulfil its general and specific duties and outlines those involved in the development of the scheme.

The scheme is reported on annually to governors and reviewed and revised every three years.

Roles and responsibilities

1. The Governing Body and Principal will ensure that the school complies with all relevant equality legislation.
2. The Governing Body and Principal will ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.
3. The Principal will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

Monitoring and Review

This policy incorporates the school's disability, gender and race equality schemes and its approach to community cohesion.

The disability and gender equality schemes run for 3 years but are reviewed and reported upon annually to the governing body.

This policy is supported by an annual action plan which is reviewed regularly. It is linked with the school improvement plan and includes targets for promoting race equality in the school.

It will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

Complaints

Any person who believes that the spirit or letter of this policy has been breached within the College should, in the first instance, contact the Principal.

JCA/MSJ
November 2008

Agreed by Governors on 13/11/08 at Governors' Personnel Meeting.
Agreed by Governors at Board Meeting 11/12/08.
Date for review: November 2011.