



*Thinking Schools Academy Trust*  
**“Transforming Life Chances”**

Portsmouth Academy for Girls

Equality Policy

This policy was adopted on	Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2015
The policy is to be reviewed on	

## 1. Introduction

The Academy's within the Thinking Schools Academy Trust are inclusive and focus on the wellbeing and progress of every child. They view all members of the community as equal.

The Trust believes that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

This Policy sets out how the Trust and Portsmouth Academy for Girls meet the two specific duties within the Equality to act.

The Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two Specific Duties:

- To publish information to show compliance with equality duty
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years, which are specific and measurable.

## 2. Adoption

This procedure was adopted by the Governing Body on 07 December 2015 and supersedes any previous Equality Policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every 4 years or earlier if there is a need. The School Actions (Section 6) and School Objectives (Section 7) will be reviewed annually.

## 3. Thinking Schools Academy Trust 6 Principles

### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value**

- Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin, national status, gender or sexual orientation

### **Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity**

- 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, women and men are recognised.

### **Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

- 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, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment

**Principle 4: 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, national status, gender or sexual orientation

**Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist, and take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:**

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

**Principle 6: We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:**

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled
- People of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys and LGBT

#### **4. Equality Statement**

a) In accordance with Trust and Academy ethos and values we respect the equal human rights of all our students, educate them about equality and respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the school community.

b) We assess our school practices, policies, procedures and provision and implement all necessary resulting actions in relation to: ethnicity, religion or belief, socio-economic background, gender and gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, and age.

c) We promote community cohesion at Academy, local, national and global levels, comparing our school community to its local and national context and implementing all necessary actions in relation to: ethnicity, religion or belief, and socio-economic background.

#### **5. Responsibilities**

**The Local Governing Body** has a duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. Functionally, the governing body discharges this responsibility through the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. A named Governor works with SLT to ensure equality duties, up-to-date policies, and any required plans are put into place.

**The Headteacher & SLT** promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- raising awareness of all the duties within the whole school community;
- ensuring understanding of the broad legal definition of disability;
- sensitively encouraging declaration of protected characteristics by children and young people, parents/carers, staff and other users of the school;
- ensuring that action plans are undertaken for all protected characteristics;
- ensuring that the principles of relevance, proportionality, reasonable adjustment and positive action are applied appropriately.

- providing appropriate training for staff, Governors and other members of the school community;
- monitor the outcomes and impact of provisions, criteria and practices on all groups, and respond with appropriate actions;
- in the event of expectations not being met, ensuring action is taken in accordance with the status of those involved.

**6. Action Portsmouth Academy for Girls is taking to; Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; Advance equality of opportunity between different groups and foster good relations between different groups**

**a) Pupils' attainment and progress**

All staff have high expectations of all pupils and continually challenge them to reach higher standards. The school recognises and values both effort and achievement. Pupil performance data is analysed by ethnicity, gender, disability, special educational need and social background and interventions are put in place to support all learners to make progress. No groups are treated as homogenous and they are looked at through different lenses e.g the needs of the most able disadvantaged learners, the needs of learners who are both disadvantaged and have EAL etc.

**b) The quality of provision – Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

All staff ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all contributions are valued. Positive steps are taken to include students who may otherwise be marginalized. Students' experiences and starting points are taken account of e.g. student grouping is planned and varied to reflect the requirements of learners and their social development needs. Teachers use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress. Assessments are analysed for gender, cultural and social bias, and take account access issues, e.g. print size.

**c) The quality of provision - curriculum and other activities**

The academy provides an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds. It builds on students' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- girls (the school will become co-ed in 2017 so this will need to be revised)
- students learning English as an additional language
- students from minority ethnic groups, including Gypsies and Travellers
- students who are gifted and talented
- students with special educational needs
- students who are in public care
- students who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion (see Achievement centre curriculum)
- lesbian, gay or questioning young people

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils. The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

Extra curricular activities and special events e.g. school productions, cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental preferences related to religion and culture (for example Bengali tuition and Saturday school).

#### **d) The quality of provision – guidance and support**

We actively promote good personal and community relations and recognise diversity as having a positive role to play within the school. All staff are expected to foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among students from all ethnic groups and range of abilities.

Staff challenge stereotypes and foster students' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.

Our pastoral support takes account of religious, cultural and ethnic differences, special educational needs, disability and the experiences and needs of Traveller pupils, refugees and asylum seekers children. The school provides appropriate support for students learning English as an additional language and students are encouraged to use their home and community languages to enhance their learning

Victims of harassment and bullying are given appropriate support. The perpetrators are dealt with in line with school policy and are provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

#### **e) Behaviour and Attendance**

The academy expects high standards of behaviour from all students, appropriate for their developmental level. We have procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour that are fair and applied equally to all. All staff are expected to operate consistent systems of rewards and consequences.

It is recognised that cultural background and disability may affect behaviour. Our school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Clear procedures are in place so that all forms of bullying and harassment, including racism and harassment related to disability, sexism and homophobia, are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently and are in line with policies and guidance such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents. All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies. All staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice and are offered support in handling such matters

We encourage staff to explore their own views and attitudes to difference and to monitor their practice in relation to this policy. Adults in school take care to lead through example, demonstrating high expectations of all students.

We monitor exclusions by gender, ethnicity and special educational need. Background is also considered. This school will take all reasonable steps to prevent the exclusion of a student for a reason related to any disability they may have.

Students, staff and parents are aware of policies and procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group, is always unacceptable. Information and advice on attendance and exclusion is made available to parents/carers in accessible formats such as relevant community languages and large print.

We make provision for leave of absence for religious observance, for staff as well as students.

We monitor attendance by gender, ethnicity and special educational need. Background is also considered. Action is taken in order to address any disparities between different groups of pupils. The school will fully support children with long-term medical needs who may have an erratic attendance because they are in and out of hospital.

## **f) Partnership with students, parents, carers and the wider community**

We monitor parental involvement and look to raise participation of under-represented groups of parents and sections of the community. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all.

Progress reports to parents/carers are clearly written and free from jargon to encourage parents to participate in their child's education. Where necessary information is available in languages and formats other than English. Parents with a disability or with learning difficulties will be able to access school's information.

Parents are fully involved in the school-based response for their child with special educational needs, understand the purpose of any intervention or programme of action and are told about the parent partnership service when SEN is identified.

When necessary, the school works in partnership with parents and the community to address specific incidents and to develop positive attitudes to difference.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

## **g) Leadership and management**

Steps are taken to ensure the school's admission process is fair and equitable to all pupils, including those with English as an additional language.

This school does not discriminate against a disabled student in the arrangements it makes for determining admission.

We will admit students with already identified special educational needs. Students with statements of special educational needs will always be admitted unless, through the statutory assessment process, it is demonstrated that the student's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children.

Comprehensive information about students' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in admissions forms and gathered at admissions interview.

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equitable and in line with statutory duties.

We welcome people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school and ensure recruitment and selection processes are monitored. Equality and diversity issues are reflected in our school's employment practices

Everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. All staff and visitors must support the ethos of the school, promoting equality and challenging bias and stereotyping wherever they observe it. We will ensure that staff training continually highlights equality issues. Equality is incorporated in the induction programme for new staff.

The skills of all staff, including non-teaching and part-time staff, are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and the school strives to reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

This school opposes all forms of racism, homophobia, prejudice and discrimination.

#### **h) Linguistic Diversity**

We welcome the diversity of languages in our school and we give them all status and value. We look for opportunities to use our languages to enrich the curricular experience of all our pupils and we draw upon the expertise of our school community wherever possible.

#### **7. Portsmouth Academy for Girls Equality Objectives**

1. Check that staff and students agree that the policy is implemented consistently, in all aspects of the school's work (by March 2016)
2. Engage with the student executive team to help support the implementation of the policy and provide a written report (by July 2016)