

## Equality Objectives Statement

September 2019-July 2021

### Rationale

At Highlands School equal opportunities are central to our school ethos and values. We expect all students and staff to challenge and act upon racism, sexism, homophobia and all other forms of prejudice and discrimination, including bullying and harassment. We are pro-active in promoting inclusion, diversity and mutual respect through policy, assemblies and the curriculum and through developing our students' character and values.

### Vision Statement and School Values

Highlands School is a community school where every student and colleague is nurtured to be the very best they can be. Our values and ethos are clear and tangible from the moment you enter the school, and all members of the school community share our DARE values; determination, aspiration, respect and equality. Being part of the Highlands' family is based on a shared understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion. We are a very diverse community and our diversity is our strength. Every member of our community is included, heard and valued.

Community education is very important to us. We believe that our school is here to serve and support the local community, and that the children of our community deserve the very best. We are committed to being a forward thinking employer with established best practice in ethical recruitment, flexible working and gender equality. Our 21st Century curriculum celebrates diversity in all its forms and embodies British Values. We are a reflective organisation and we are always reviewing our policies and process to ensure they reflect our school ethos and strong equalities focus.

### Justification and Legal Requirements

The public sector equality duty is a duty on public authorities to consider how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

When public authorities carry out their functions, the Equality Act says they must have due regard or think about the need to:

1. **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation
2. **Improve equality of opportunity** between people with protected characteristics and those who do not
3. **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

We ensure that our school policies and practices reflect The Equality Act 2010. The Act aims to promote a fair and more equal society and to protect our students and colleagues from unfair treatment. The Equality Act defines nine protected characteristics applicable to our students and colleagues.

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership

- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act states that discrimination of the above protected characteristics can manifest in the following form

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- failure to make reasonable adjustments
- discrimination arising from a protected characteristic
- harassment
- victimisation

At Highlands we take an intersectional approach to equal opportunities, ensuring that we are mindful that colleagues and students have multi-layered identities. This might mean that some staff and students may identify with more than one protected characteristic.

### **Equalities Objectives**

Every two years we will publish Equalities Objectives. We will review and monitor how we are working towards these objectives.

#### **Our Equality Objectives 2019-2021:**

- 1) To identify and then actively address gaps in students' academic achievement and participation in extra-curricular activities, in particular: disadvantaged students, students with special educational needs, looked after students and students from different heritage groups.
- 2) To ensure that our curriculum and teaching challenges racism, religious prejudice, homophobia, transphobia and sexism and promotes mutual respect and equality.
- 3) To actively ensure that we engage stakeholders in developing equalities best practice, policy and provision in the workplace so that all staff and students feel represented and included in our school community.