



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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Adopted by	Senior Leadership Team	Date	Summer 2026
Approved by Advisory Body on			
Next review due by	Summer 2028		

Other relevant policies:

Risk Assessment Policy

Accessibility Plan

Attendance policy

PSHE curriculum and policy

Relationships and Sex Education curriculum and policy

SMSC (including British values) curriculum and policy

Countering Bullying (including Cyberbullying) policy

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy

Safeguarding Children and Young People in Education policy

Compliments and Complaints policy

Behaviour policy

Allergy policy

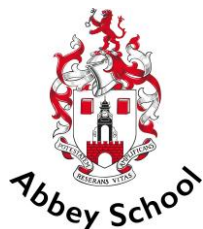
Dignity at work policy

Staff Disciplinary policy and procedure

Staff Grievance policy

Flexible Working policy

Staff Capability policy



Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)	2
4. Roles and Responsibilities	3
4.1. Proprietor and Advisory Body.....	3
4.2. Senior Leadership Team (SLT)	3
4.3. Staff.....	3
5. Eliminating discrimination.....	3
6. Advancing equality of opportunity.....	3
7. Forms of discrimination	4
8. Fostering good relations	4
9. Equality considerations in decision making.....	4
10. Recruitment and selection	5
11. Staff training.....	5
12. Termination of employment	5
13. Disability discrimination.....	5
13.1. Reasonable adjustments	6
14. Equality objectives	6
15. Breaches of this policy	7
16. Monitoring arrangements	7
Appendix I: Reasonable adjustments proposal form.....	8

1. Aims

Abbey School aims to be a place where everyone feels welcomed and valued. It aims to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and create a school where individual differences and contributions are recognised and valued.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. A protected characteristic being:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- Promote dignity and respect for all
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Our school's overall values are underpinned by our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. We are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil receives an education that offers them the best chance at fulfilling their potential, and to promoting mental wellbeing amongst our pupils. We are committed to supporting and celebrating all pupils' individual identities. We have developed this policy to provide a clear framework for how we will achieve our school's aims

This policy also applies to all aspects of the school's relationships with staff and to relations between staff members at all levels

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023

This document is also based on the Department for Education (DfE) guidance:

- [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)

3. Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

Although Abbey School is an independent school, it provides education to pupils with an EHCP and funded by their local authority. It could, therefore, be implied that it is performing a public function and the PSED be applicable

The PSED requires due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. Proprietor and Advisory Body

The proprietor and advisory body will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Ensure the effective operation of this policy
- Ensure compliance with the laws surrounding this policy

4.2. Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT will be responsible for:

- Setting an appropriate standard of behaviour and leading by example
- Ensuring that those they manage adhere to this policy and promote the school's aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities
- Taking appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities
- Making opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff and promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures
- Reviewing and updating employment practices and procedures, and this policy, to take account of changes in the law
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to the advisory body

4.3. Staff

All staff will be expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in [Section 8](#) by acting as role models for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole school community.

Staff will be responsible for understanding that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against their colleagues, parents, pupils, visitors and the public

Any staff member who deliberately and knowingly contravenes this policy may be subject to formal disciplinary action

5. Eliminating discrimination

The school is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities for every member of the school community, is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

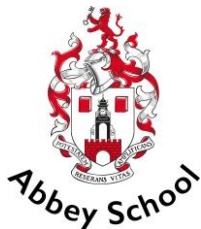
Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff are reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and receive training as part of their induction.

6. Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they may have.
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic.



- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities.

7. Forms of discrimination

No person or body must unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people, including current and former staff members, job applicants, pupils, parents, contractors, volunteers and visitors. This applies within the school, outside of school and on school-related trips or events including social events.

The following forms of discrimination are unlawful and prohibited under this policy:

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics outlined in Appendix A. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not “fit in” would be direct discrimination. Direct discrimination can include associative discrimination, where a person is treated less favourably because of their association with an individual with a protected characteristic, and perception discrimination, where a person is treated less favourably because of the mistaken belief that they possess a protected characteristic

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by a provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement will be discriminatory unless objectively justified

Harassment related to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation is prohibited. Harassment including sexual harassment, is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is where someone suffers a detriment because they have done a “protected act” or it is believed they may do a protected act. A protected act is bringing proceedings under the Equality Act 2010, giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the Equality Act 2010, doing any other thing for the purposes of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010 and/or alleging that the company or another person has contravened the Equality Act 2010

Disability discrimination includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

8. Fostering good relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Teaching in the PSHE curriculum different types of families, differences and similarities between ourselves and other people.
- RSE curriculum creating positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships and teaching about appropriate behaviours and where relevant, with reference to the law.
- Staff training and line manager training

9. Equality considerations in decision making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

10. Recruitment and selection

Recruitment, promotion, and any other selection exercises will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. When recruiting or promoting, we will aim to take steps to improve the diversity of our workforce and provide equality of opportunity.

The school will aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics. The school's recruitment procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is relevant to the job and not disproportionate. The shortlisting of applicants will be done by more than one person wherever possible.

Job advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying. The school will take steps to ensure that vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market.

Job applicants will not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants will not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children. However, due to the physical pupil-supporting nature of some of our roles and the limitations of our historic, listed site, we are entitled to ask some health questions on our application form.

Generally, applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which will only be used with the School Business Manager's approval, such as:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments)
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.

The school is required by law to ensure that all staff are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, will be expected to produce original documents, e.g. a passport, before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the UK Visas and Immigration

11. Staff training

Line managers will be given appropriate training on recognising and avoiding discrimination, harassment, victimisation, unconscious bias and promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in the areas of recruitment, development and promotion

The school will provide all staff with regular training to ensure that everyone is aware of and understands the contents of this policy and the Staff Dignity at Work Policy.

12. Termination of employment

The school will ensure that all decisions regarding the termination of employment are undertaken in a fair and objective way and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory. In all cases the school will act in accordance with this policy and all related policies, examples being the school's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and the school's specific Capability Policies

13. Disability discrimination

The school will encourage staff who are disabled or become disabled to inform their line manager about their condition and HR by updating their health form so that the school can support them as appropriate

13.1. Reasonable adjustments

Staff experiencing difficulties at work because of their disability (physical or otherwise) should raise with their line manager in the first instance to discuss their difficulties and explore whether any reasonable adjustments would help overcome or minimise the difficulty.

Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer makes to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability. They are specific to an individual person. They can be for physical or mental health conditions. They can cover any area of work.

Employers must make reasonable adjustments when:

- they know, or could reasonably be expected to know, someone is disabled
- a disabled staff member or job applicant asks for adjustments
- someone who's disabled is having difficulty with any part of their job
- someone's absence record, sickness record or delay in returning to work is because of, or linked to, their disability

What “**reasonable**” means?

What is reasonable depends on each situation. The employer must consider carefully if the adjustment:

- will remove or reduce the disadvantage
- is practical to make
- is affordable
- could harm the health and safety of others

The employer does not have to change the basic nature of the job and does not have to make adjustments that are unreasonable. However, they should still find other ways to support the disabled person. This could include making other adjustments that are reasonable

Their line manager will consult with HR for advice before a reasonable adjustment meeting is completed with the staff member. The proposal form (see [Appendix I](#)) will be completed at the meeting and will be presented to SLT for their consideration

The proposal will either be:

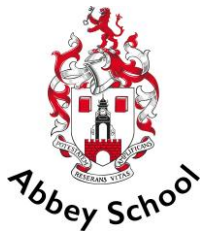
- Approved and sent to the employee for their signature
- Not approved and a meeting will be held by HR and the line manager to discuss next steps and whether any suggested counter proposals would be agreeable

We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the staff members needs within reason. If the school consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible

All reasonable adjustments will be considered in a timely manner and no more than 2 working weeks after receipt of the form.

14. Equality objectives

- To ensure that each member of our school community is valued as an individual.
- To ensure that all staff promote positive attitudes towards equality and challenge prejudice.
- Train all members of staff involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and diversity.
- To enable pupils to appreciate and value difference and diversity.



15. Breaches of this policy

The school takes a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination and victimisation may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal

If a staff member believes they have suffered harassment, bullying or discrimination, or witnessed it happening to someone else in the workplace, should refer to our Dignity at Work policy and raise the matter with the appropriate senior employee

16. Monitoring arrangements

The Principal will update the equality information we publish, at least every year.

This document will be reviewed by the senior leadership team at least every four years.

This document will be approved by the Advisory Body

Appendix I: Reasonable adjustments proposal form

This document has been issued to you following your meeting with [NAME OF STAFF MEMBER] on [DATE] about the proposed reasonable adjustments required in order to help meet your individual needs. The school has decided that reasonable adjustments will be implemented – the details of which are outlined in this document.

Please read through this document carefully. Once you have filled in the relevant fields with your line manager, return this document to HR as soon as possible

This is a working document that may need to go back and forth before a final decision is made

Confirmed reasonable adjustments

The adjustments that will be introduced are outlined below. If you are satisfied with the proposed adjustments and the date of their commencement, please sign the field at the end of this table

Description of adjustment	Date of commencement	Review date

I confirm that I am satisfied with the information and commencement dates above.

Approved by	
Date	
Employee signature	
Date	

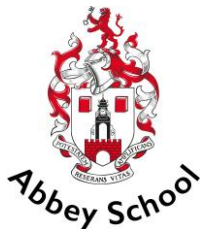
Adjustments that have not been confirmed or require amendments

The adjustments discussed that cannot be implemented or require adjustments are listed below, along with our reasoning why implementation will not be possible at this time. If you are satisfied with the following information, please sign the field at the end of the table

Description of adjustment	Reason for not implementing this adjustment	Any counter proposal from school for this adjustment

I confirm that I am satisfied with the information and commencement dates above.

Approved by	
Date	



Employee signature	
Date	

Counter proposals

Should you disagree with the proposals for any reasonable adjustments outlined in this document, or have concerns about any of the adjustments we have decided we cannot implement, you are invited to outline your concerns in the box below. Please include any counter proposals you may have.

Please return this document to HR as soon as possible so that your counter proposals can be considered in a timely manner

If you do not have any concerns or counter proposals at this time, please leave this section blank

Employee concerns and counter proposals	
Employee signature and date	