



Gosfield School

Equality and Diversity Policy (Including LGBTQ)

This policy should be read in conjunction with our School's Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy, SEND, and our Anti-Bullying Policy, Anti-Racism Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Admissions Policy and our Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Gosfield School is a fully inclusive school. We firmly believe that all stakeholders should feel safe, respected, valued and secure when attending this school. It sets out the School's approach to children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning and related issues in line with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010:

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 stipulates that schools have a duty to promote the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in their care, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and gender questioning pupils and those experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) bullying. DoFE KCSIE 2024.

Equality Act 2010 Schools are required to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender reassignment. This includes tackling HBT bullying. Schools are also required to promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This means that schools should take proactive steps to promote respect and understanding of LGBTQ people and issues.

Definition: LGBTQ has been an accepted acronym since 1996; it may refer to anyone who is non-heterosexual or non-cisgender, and not exclusively to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. To recognise this inclusion, a popular variant adds the letter Q for those who identify as queer or are questioning their sexual identity,

AIMS

Our aim is to celebrate and support the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This Diversity and Inclusion Policy extends to adults: staff, parents and carers. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, giving due regard to groups with 'protected characteristics', in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership, in accordance with the Act.

Gosfield School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians, pupils and staff have an important role in supporting the whole school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they cooperate closely together. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to show similar consideration in all dealings with each other, the staff and the School. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, bullying and harassment and will make every effort to comply with the requirements of the Act and its subsequent provisions.

VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

School Diversity Week 2019 Education Secretary, Damian Hinds said:

At the heart of preparing children for life in modern Britain is making sure that they understand the world they are growing up in. It is a world that is different from 20 years ago, when this guidance was last updated, and this is a significant step that will help young people to look after themselves and each other.

A wide range of views were expressed during the public consultation, and I believe the guidance strikes the right balance. Our new guidance is clear that children should leave school having learnt about LGBTQ relationships.

*“In light of the **Cass Review**, it is important that schools take a cautious approach to teaching about this sensitive topic, and do not use any materials that present contested views as fact, including the view that gender is a spectrum. This is in line with the Department’s gender questioning guidance, which also takes a cautious approach to assist teachers in ensuring they are acting in the best interests of children.”*

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in education, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. This policy is therefore underpinned by the following values, principles and standards:

- Equality and social justice;
- Acknowledging and valuing diversity;
- Respect for others;
- Compliance with equal opportunities legislation;
- Elimination of all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination;
- Active challenge to stereotypes, prejudiced attitudes and unfair discriminatory behaviour;
- Commitment to inclusive education which enables and supports all pupils to develop their full potential;
- Accountability for compliance with this policy by all members of the School;
- To provide an inclusive environment in which LGBTQ pupils and staff are valued and respected;
- To promote understanding of and support the needs of LGBTQ pupils and staff;
- To provide an inclusive curriculum;
- To monitor and tackle HBT language and bullying.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Equality and Diversity Policy are to:

- Develop an ethos which respects and values all people;
- Actively promote equality of opportunity;
- Prepare pupils for life in a diverse society;
- Promote good relations amongst people within the school community and the wider communities within which we work;
- Eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination, bullying, harassment or other oppressive behaviour through use of the School Disciplinary Procedures when required;
- Deliver equality and diversity through our school policies, procedures and practice;
- Do our utmost, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to school provision and activities;
- Take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by stereotyping and cultural expectations;

By ensuring that school policies and practices are inclusive and supportive of LGBTQ people and state that HBT language and bullying are unacceptable;

- By providing training to staff in supporting LGBTQ pupils, developing an LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum and tackling HBT language and bullying;
- By providing support structures and information/resources to LGBTQ pupils on LGBTQ issues and support services;
- By providing pupils the opportunities to discuss gender identity and sexuality, and including LGBTQ people and themes in the PSHE and wider curriculum;
- By providing ways for pupils to report HBT language and bullying, monitoring (including through staff and pupil surveys) and recording HBT language and bullying, as well as ensuring that pupils are aware that HBT language and bullying are wrong;
- By ensuring that the school assemblies or displays which celebrate diversity or tackle bullying are LGBTQ-inclusive;
- By ensuring that unnecessarily gendered aspects of school life are avoided, having unisex facilities for example.

COMMUNICATION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

We will take active steps to communicate this Equality and Diversity Policy to all pupils, parents, staff, and Governors of the School. This will be part of the new staff induction process and training and refresher training for all staff and Governors.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Governors are responsible for making sure the School follows all of its equality and diversity policies and codes and meets its legal responsibilities with respect to equality.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with all equality legislation;
- Ensuring the School implements its equality and diversity policies and codes of practice;

- Following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying;
- Ensuring that appropriate records are kept of any cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying.

School SLT are responsible for:

- Putting the School's equality and diversity policies and codes into practice;
- Making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out;
- Following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying.

All staff is responsible for:

- Promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination;
- Challenging any incidents of unfair discrimination or racial, sexual or other stereotyping, perpetrated by pupils or other staff;
- Respecting others in their language and actions;
- Follow the School's equality and diversity policy, and the staff code of conduct.

Staff will:

- Ensure victims of bullying with regard to LGBTQ are listened to, taken seriously and informed of what action will be taken or support given. Give reassurance that all possible steps will be taken to ensure their safety and wellbeing;
- Act immediately and record all incidents of HBT language and bullying and speak discreetly to ensure that problems are dealt with sympathetically;
- Ensure that parents/carers are contacted and kept well informed that the matter is being dealt with.
- Raise awareness of LGBTQ issues/HBT bullying through assemblies, curriculum opportunities, guest speakers and displays.
- Provide pupils with LGBTQ-inclusive Sex and Relationship Education opportunities to discuss gender identity and sexuality.
- Receive appropriate training in LGBTQ and develop a fully inclusive curriculum that tackles HBT language and bullying.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Equality and Diversity Policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure it remains compliant with Equality and Diversity legislation. Any new legislation will be included in the policy as and when it is brought into the public domain. To ensure good practice is followed SLT will:

- Monitor the progress of pupils of minority groups and compare this to the progress made by other pupils in the School;
- Monitor the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against
- Take into serious consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or pupils;
- Monitor the school behaviour and exclusions policy, so those pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

What can a pupil do if they are being subject to LGBTQ abuse and discrimination?

- Do not retaliate
- Do not keep it a secret. Talk about it to a staff member, family or friends;
- Staff are here to support and they can help to decide how to handle the situation and take necessary action.

Guidelines for parents/carers:

- Parents/carers are reminded of the importance of taking an active interest in their child's school / social life
- If parents/carers think their child is being LGBTQ bullied or have reason to believe their child is experiencing difficulties with the LGBTQ agenda they should, contact the School immediately. School staff will listen to any concerns and where necessary arrange a meeting to discuss further.

PROCEDURES FOR STAFF

Any member of staff who observes an LGBTQ incident or to whom an LGBTQ incident is reported to should:

- Listen carefully to the pupil, give them sufficient opportunity to discuss their concerns, describe what has been happening and treat what they say seriously.
- Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing and thank them for either reporting the LGBTQ bullying themselves, and/or agreeing to discuss the matter. Give them the support by assuring them that school will take appropriate action.
- All LGBTQ incidents must be recorded and reported to SLT

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

- If an incident of bullying is reported, the member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved.
- He/she will inform the Tutor and/or Head of House/Head of Section/ Assistant Principal Pastoral as soon as possible.
- The appropriate member of staff will calmly explain the range of disciplinary measures that are potentially involved.
- A member of the pastoral team will interview the victim on his/her own as soon as possible. They will be interviewed separately from the alleged perpetrator and asked to give an account of events a written statement. It will be made clear to him/her why revenge is inappropriate. He/she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself. Pupils are required to write and sign an account of the incident which may be helpful to staff as the investigation progresses.
- The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually afterwards by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and asked to provide a signed written account. It will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions, as stated in the school's behaviour policy.
- The incident is recorded and passed to all relevant members of the pastoral team.

- The Assistant Principal Pastoral maintains a central log of any incidents, monitors progression and identifies patterns. Dates and details of ongoing situations are logged and the Senior Leadership Team are kept informed. A holistic picture is maintained between different aspects of school provision such as teaching and health care and the Assistant Principal Pastoral forwards relevant information to all concerned.
- All appropriate staff will be informed. In very serious incidents, the Vice Principal, Head of Prep and/or Principal will be informed.
- When necessary, the parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, will be agreed. It is important to recognise that suitable support is needed both for pupils who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- Those involved will be closely monitored by the pastoral team, led by the Assistant Principal Pastoral.
- Strong sanctions such as behaviour contracts or exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.
- A bullying incident is treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- In very serious cases, and only after the Principal has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to Social Services. However, it is the policy of Gosfield School to attempt to resolve such issues internally.

Ratified by the Governing Council of Gosfield School

Jon Corral.

Signed

(Chairman of Governors)

Date: 7 October 2024

Date of next review: August 2025

Signed _____
Principal

[Handwritten Signature]

Date: _____

7/10/24