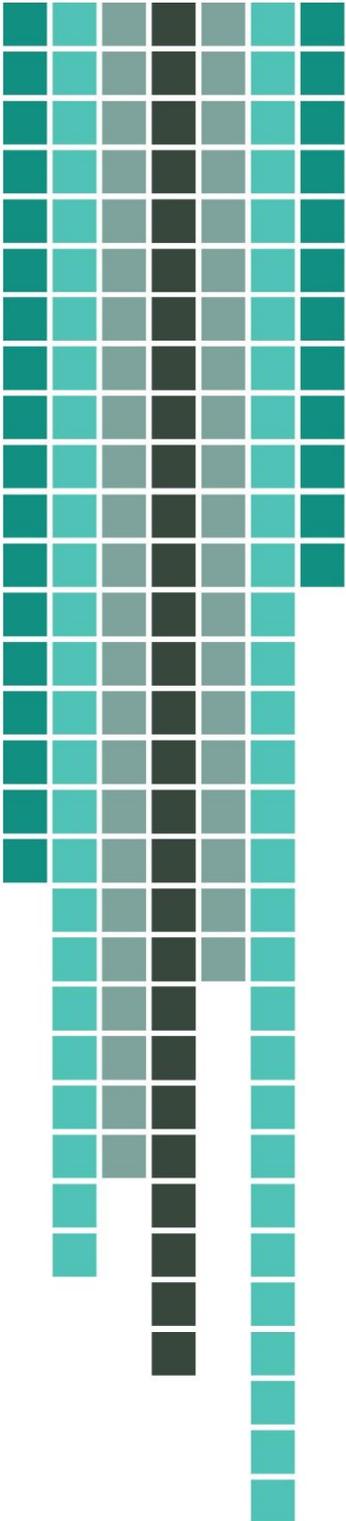




# Eggar's School

## Equal Opportunities Policy



To be read in conjunction with the  
Eggar's School  
Equality, Information & Objectives Statement

Reviewer	Linda Campbell
Review date	February 2019
Next review date	March 2020

## Introduction

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer. We believe that all students and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our students, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture. For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the Employment Equality Policy.

## Eggar's School's Equalities Aims

The general equality aims of Eggar's School are to:

- Promote good practice in equality of opportunity in the organisation's activities;
- Ensure that the organisation's commitment to equality is widely known, understood and communicated.

Our specific equality aims are to work with our students, employees, parents, contractors and key stakeholders:

- as a **school**, to provide an outstanding education which meets the needs of all our students and enables all to achieve success;
- as an **employer**, to have a workforce which is representative of the community we serve; to value and use the diversity of its staff; to strive to be a place where people want to work; to be a leader in good practice in this area; to ensure fair treatment and equality of opportunity for all and to recruit the best person for the job based on careful analysis of job requirements and performance.
- as a **community leader**, to champion equality of opportunity, challenge all forms of discrimination and contribute to making the local community a place where people live together safely in peace, respect and friendship;
- as a **major procurer and commissioner of services**, to use our spending power wherever possible to influence other organisations in promoting equality of opportunity.

## Our Context

We are a mixed semi-rural comprehensive school with nearly 900 students aged between 11 and 16. Our learners are characterised by having a wide breadth of attainment within each cohort.

The socio-economic background of most of our students is favourable, although a significant minority do not have some of the advantages of their peers.

The school has a local authority Resourced Provision for 18 students with a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) – in our case, dyslexia. These students are fully integrated into the heart of the school and attend all but a very few mainstream lessons.

## National and Legal Context

- 1.1 This policy has been prepared to meet Eggar's responsibilities under:
  - 1.1.1 Equality Act 2010;
  - 1.1.2 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
  - 1.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;
  - 1.1.4 Children Act 1989;
  - 1.1.5 Childcare Act 2006; and
  - 1.1.6 Children and Families Act 2014.
- 1.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:
  - 1.2.1 Equality Act 2010: explanatory notes (2010);
  - 1.2.2 Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, January 2015);
  - 1.2.3 Technical guidance for Schools in England (Equality and Human Rights Commission, July 2014);

- 1.2.4 The Equality Act 2010 and Schools: departmental advice for School leaders, Academy staff, governing bodies and local authorities (DfE, May 2014);
- 1.2.5 Working together to safeguard children (HM Government, March 2015)
- 1.2.6 Keeping Children Safe in Education (HM Government, September 2018).

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies;

- 1.2.1 Equal opportunities;
- 1.2.2 Admissions;
- 1.2.3 Behaviour/Discipline/Exclusions;
- 1.2.4 Academy rules;
- 1.2.5 Uniform policy;
- 1.2.6 Anti-bullying policy;
- 1.2.7 Disability policy;
- 1.2.8 Accessibility plan;
- 1.2.9 Special educational needs policy.

## Principles

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

### 1. All students, families and staff are of equal value

Eggar's School sees all students, potential students, their parents and carers, and staff as of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled;
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status;
- Whatever their gender and gender identity;
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background;
- Whatever their sexual orientation;
- Whatever their marital status;
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth;
- Whatever their age;
- Whether or not they have refugee or asylum status.

### 2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or students may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

- 1.2.10 Disability;  
Gender reassignment;  
Pregnancy and maternity;
- 1.2.11 Race;
- 1.2.12 Religion and belief (including lack of religion or belief);
- 1.2.13 Gender;
- 1.2.14 Sexual orientation and (in the case of adult members of the Academy community);
- 1.2.15 Marital or civil partnership status; and
- 1.2.16 Age.

The Academy also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

### 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes and interaction between groups and communities different from each other;
- an absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics

#### Admission

- **Applicants:** Eggar's School accepts applications from, and admits students irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or

special educational needs (**SEN**) and will not discriminate on these grounds in the terms on which a place is offered. The school will treat every application in a fair, open-minded way.

- **Admissions policy:** Eggar's admissions policy reflects the school's approach towards equal opportunities for prospective students and is consistent with this policy.

#### **Education and associated services**

- **Equal access:** Eggar's School will afford all students equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to overriding considerations of safety and welfare.
- **Positive action:** Eggar's School may afford students of a particular racial group, or students with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the students in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.
- **Exclusions:** Eggar's School will not discriminate against any student by excluding them from school, or by subjecting them to any other detriment, on the grounds of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, or special educational needs.
- **Teaching and Academy materials:** efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example, gender or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the school's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.
- **Student interaction:** all students are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other students, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief, pregnancy or maternity or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the school, and students will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes. Eggar's School's PSHE curriculum encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the Protected Characteristics.
- **Bullying:** Eggar's School will not tolerate bullying or cyberbullying for any reason. Specific types of bullying include:
  - bullying relating to race, religion, belief or culture;
  - bullying related to SEN, learning difficulties or disabilities;
  - bullying related to appearance or health conditions;
  - bullying relating to sexual orientation;
  - bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances;
  - sexist or sexual bullying.

#### **Eggar's School uniform:**

- **Eggar's School uniform policy is consistent with this policy:** the same school uniform policy applies equally to all students, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, the school will consider reasonable requests to alter the uniform, for example, for genuine religious requirements and reasonable adjustments for disabled children.
- **Symbols of faith:** certain items of jewellery, such as the Kara bangle worn by Sikhs, and certain items of headwear, such as the turban and headscarves may be worn by students when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious or racial beliefs or identity. This is subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the school's existing uniform policy principles (in regards to, for example, school uniform colours). Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred by the student or their parents to the Head Teacher, whose decision will be final, subject to the complaints procedure.
- **Disabled students:** reasonable adjustments may be required to the school uniform for disabled students who require them. The student or their parents should refer the matter to the Head Teacher to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the student.

#### **Religious belief**

- **Religion:** Eggar's religious ethos, services and school timetable are set in accordance with the Christian tradition, but the school respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with other faiths, or no faith, subject always to their respecting the rights and freedoms of the school community as a whole and considerations of safety and welfare.

## Disability and Special Educational Needs

- **Our approach:** we are an inclusive school which welcomes members of the community with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people and those with special educational needs in all the activities of the school and we will not treat a member of the school community less favourably on these grounds without justification. At present, our facilities, physical and otherwise, for the disabled and those with special educational needs are limited. However, we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the school's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone. Our disability policy and policy on special educational needs are consistent with this policy. For a copy of these policies, please contact the School Business Manager.
- Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. This policy covers the following forms of discrimination:
  - **Direct discrimination:** direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting an applicant of one race because it is considered they would not "fit in". This would be a decision based on grounds of their race and would be direct discrimination. Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity). For example, if a student is harassed or victimised because a sibling is disabled, this would be direct discrimination against that student.
  - **Indirect discrimination:** indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. For example, a minimum height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If these criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with gender, they would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of gender.
  - **Discrimination arising from disability:** discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, where a student with cerebral palsy who is a wheelchair user is told they will be unable to attend a school trip because there is no wheelchair access available and other options are not investigated.
- **Reasonable adjustments:** Eggar's School has an on-going duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students and students with special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other students. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of school life, for example:
  - the curriculum;
  - classroom organisation and timetabling;
  - access to school facilities;
  - clubs and visits;
  - school sports; and
  - school policies.
- Reasonable adjustments may typically include:
  - allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam;
  - providing examination papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment;
  - rearranging the timetable to allow a student to attend a class in an accessible part of the building;
  - arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.
- In making reasonable adjustments the school is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled students where to do so would be reasonable. The school will carefully consider any proposals made by parents/carers and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.
- As well as providing educational services, Eggar's School provides services to the public, for example at:
  - open days;
  - parents' evenings;
  - concerts and plays;
  - exhibitions;
  - use of sports facilities.
- When providing such services Eggar's School will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people are able to use the school's services as far as is reasonable to the same extent and standard as non-disabled people.
- For reasonable adjustments for staff please see the equal opportunities policy for staff.

- **Informing the school:** parents/carers of students are required to notify the Head Teacher in writing if they are aware or suspect that the student (or prospective student) has a disability or if they (either parent), the student (or prospective student), or any close relations have at any time had, or has a learning difficulty. Parents/carers must provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the school with such information will enable the school to support the student as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis. Eggar's school will have due regard to any request made by a parent/carer or student (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.
- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (**SENCo**): Eggar's School's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) is **Cathy Vickers**.
- **Access:** Eggar's School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the school will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. The school has an accessibility plan, which is kept under review and revised as necessary. The plan is available on request from the School Business Manager.

#### **Students with statements of special educational needs or EHC Plans**

Eggar's policy on special educational needs includes details about the welfare and educational provision for students with statements of special educational needs or EHC Plans.

#### **Students with English as an additional language**

- Students with English as an additional language will receive additional learning support if necessary. The school will consult with the student and the parents as appropriate. The school has appropriate welfare support for all such students through the supportive pastoral culture .
- **Language and culture:** Eggar's School will ensure that:
  - home-school links are made to involve parents/carers directly in the work of the school;
  - interpretation and translation services are made available as quickly as possible;
  - links are established within the local community;
  - staff work effectively with other local services;
  - learning support for ethnic minority students is efficient and effective;
  - provision is made for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, supported by appropriate resources and information; and
  - students' names should be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Students should be encouraged to accept and respect names from cultures other than their own.

#### **Provision for students with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs**

All reasonable provision will be made for students with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs. Parents are requested to inform the Head Teacher, in writing if any particular arrangements or adjustments need to be made for their child. The school will make good effort to make any reasonable adjustments.

#### **4. We observe good practice with regards to equality for staff**

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

#### **5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist**

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

#### **6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard**

In our development of policies we engage with groups and individuals, including students who are affected by a policy or activity, to ensure that their views are taken into account

#### **7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion**

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum will foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

## **8. We base our practices on sound evidence**

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives**

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7).

The objectives can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement and take into account both national, county and school level priorities.

We will set ourselves new objectives every four years but keep them under review.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice;
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur;
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons;
- support those in their class who have additional needs.

## **Equalities Objectives Appendix A**

We aim to enable each of our students to belong, to aspire and to achieve, no matter what their socio-economic background or previous attainment.

We work closely with outside agencies to promote attendance, wellbeing and progress. We make a contribution to the Alton Buckle to enable families in need to have access to family and/or behaviour support. We have a service level agreement with Hampshire Educational Psychology Service to enable us to better support and understand our learners.

We aim to reduce the attainment and progress gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged. We will offer appropriate and focused intervention to support them, throughout each stage of their schooling. We focus on everyone performing to the best of their ability and provide equal opportunity to do so.

We will also continue to consider how well we achieve these aims with regard to all students and staff under the Equality Act (race, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marital status, sexual orientation, religion and belief and sexual orientation).

We will offer a fully transparent process for recruitment and to ensure that all backgrounds are treated equitably throughout each stage of the process.