



REACH
Equality and Diversity
Policy

November 2016

Review Due: November 2017

1. REACH Ethos, Vision and Values

1.1 Mission Statement

REACH is committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity, creating an inclusive environment and combating any unfair treatment. We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for:

- Students in relation to education and associated services;
- Staff in relation to employment rights, conditions and opportunities;
- Parents and members of the local community in relation to additional services offered by or at our school.

As a team, we aim to reduce and eliminate barriers in accessing the curriculum and to ensure full participation in the REACH community for pupils, and prospective pupils.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which discrimination is not acceptable and students, staff and parents know how to challenge it. We will create an environment in which people feel confident about discussing any of the protected characteristics in the certain knowledge that they will receive a positive and supportive response which facilitates their full participation in the full range of activities offered by our school.

In particular, the achievement and participation of pupils and students with disabilities will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching.

We will make reasonable adjustments in relation to learning and teaching and wider aspects of school life to make sure that the educational environment is as accessible as possible.

We will use our accessibility planning duty to ensure that there is a rolling programme of improvements over the next three years in relation to access to the curriculum, access to information for both pupils and their parents and access to the school buildings, its facilities and amenities for all.

We will seek to foster a positive response to all the protected characteristics among all members of our school community and to eliminate bullying, harassment or the less favourable treatment wherever and whenever it is likely to occur.

At REACH, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn in, work in, and visit our community.

2.The Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty

2.1 Background Information

Definition

The Equality Duty is a duty on public bodies which ensures we consider the needs of all individuals in our day to day work. The Equality Duty replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender. The new Equality Duty encompasses the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

Requirements

REACH will abide by the requirements of the Equality Duty and will have due regard to the need to:

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

Having due regard means that REACH will consciously consider the above three aims as part of its decision making including how all its services are designed and delivered.

3.Roles and Responsibilities

REACH recognises that it is important that its people are aware of the Equality Duty to support its proper implementation. This includes:

- The Management Board is responsible for this scheme and for making sure that it is acted upon. Parents, staff and partners are represented on the Management Board and it welcomes involvement from all sections of the community. The Management Board will monitor and evaluate the operation and impact of this scheme and provide the resources and support structures needed to ensure effective implementation of the action plans flowing from it.
- Senior staff are responsible for overseeing the design, delivery, quality and effectiveness of education and associated services
- Front line staff are responsible for effectively using equality considerations in the delivery of services

4. Strategic Priorities

The consideration and implementation of issues linked to the Equality Duty meet the strategic priorities of REACH which are:

- Promote learning as a lifelong process
- Support people in achieving their full potential
- Provide safe, welcoming and attractive learning environments
- Provide access to services for all
- Raise achievement and attainment
- Recognise and share success
- Work in partnership with other services, agencies and the wider community
- Continuously improve the quality of the services we provide
- Ensure best value in everything we do

5.Strengths & Areas for Development

At REACH, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

At REACH, it is essential to consider procedures for dealing with pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties under the heading of inclusion.

The REACH community recognises that equal accessibility to the provision of education and associated services is an entitlement for all pupils. Accessibility can be improved by a shared multi agency approach to planning and managing resources and improved communication and curricular access.

REACH is committed to providing a range of progressive lifelong learning, cultural and leisure opportunities designed to meet the needs of the students and families of students which will enable them to become positive, informed, skilled, healthy and active citizens

6.Disability

The Equality Duty explicitly recognises that disabled people's needs may be different from those of non-disabled people. It therefore requires public bodies to take account of disabled people's impairments when making decisions about service delivery, including making any reasonable adjustments.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on ability to do normal daily activities (12 months or more).

With this in mind, REACH has put mechanisms in place for integrating disability equality into all aspects of school life including:

- promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
- eliminating discrimination against disabled people
- eliminating disability related harassment
- encouraging participation by disabled people in the life of the school
- taking necessary lawful steps to meet disabled people's needs.

These actions will increase access to the curriculum, the physical environment and the provision of information. The whole REACH community will be consulted on measures to increase participation. Feedback from our consultation will inform strategies to promote accessibility and make our environment more disabled friendly, ensuring that all students can participate in all aspects of school life and achieve socially and academically.

REACH will ensure that disabled students, staff, parents and disabled members of the community who may use school facilities will be involved in developing the scheme.

Reach will continue to work closely with students and their families through review meeting and family learning sessions. Further REACH will continually explore and develop inclusive strategies

All REACH staff will work to ensure that every effort is made to facilitate signposts to the accessibility plan: physical access; curriculum access and access to information and communication.

There are Opportunities in the REACH curriculum through CPSHE and social skills programmes to raise awareness and to develop in our young people positive attitudes to wards those who are disabled

7. Eliminating Harassment and Bullying

The REACH community will not tolerate harassment or bullying related to any of the protected characteristics and will deal with it through our relevant established procedures.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that incidents of harassment or bullying are recorded and dealt with as set out in detail in the anti bullying policy.

We will monitor and report on such incidents on a regular basis. For example, parents and students will have all policies discussed at induction meeting and sign anti bullying policy and are given copies of policies to take home for reference.

8. School Facility Lettings

This policy will apply to all school facility users including the Autumn club.

9. Information, Performance and Evidence

REACH is committed to an inclusive approach which includes giving consideration to equality issues through all policy monitoring and evaluation processes and documentation. This can be through the calendar of management activities.

Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions (including SEBD)

All processes are outlined in the Reach admissions policy. This includes our anticipatory duty in planning for the admission of all students.

Social Relationship

The building and developing of social skills is fully integrated into the curriculum of the setting

Employing, promoting and training disabled staff

At REACH, we adopt the Local Authority policy and procedures which includes the monitoring the recruitment of all staff

10. Impact Assessment

A range of evidence will be considered when evaluating the impact of this policy.

- Characteristics from admissions data
- Data on student achievement data
- Outcomes from student voice opportunities/Student Council
- Outcomes from the anti bullying/equal opportunities data base
- The number and range of additional activities /initiative which have contributed to increased access/participation

This information will be included in Management Group reports regularly.

Policies considered by REACH as being particularly relevant in terms of current priorities in order to fully embrace equality are those relating to: attainment, curriculum, accessibility, special educational needs, admission and attendance, pastoral care, harassment and bullying, good community

and race relations, staff recruitment and career development, discipline and exclusion, health and safety, membership of the governing body, partnership, procurement.