

RHK Education

Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion POLICY

Reviewed: August 25

Director: Ruth Knight

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Statement of intent

RHK EDUCATION understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, all schools have a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups.
- Promote mental health and wellbeing.

RHK EDUCATION'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.

RHK EDUCATION's demographic state is directly linked to our overall aims for achieving equality.:

RHK EDUCATION has specific aims to ensure pupils from disadvantaged social and economic backgrounds have the opportunity to succeed and have equality of access to all opportunities and experiences in and out of alternative education provision. RHK EDUCATION specifically works with young people with social, emotional and mental health needs, aiming to ensure they are supported to access a broad, enriching and relevant education. RHK EDUCATION aims to ensure that pupils who have previously been excluded from alternative education provision and given a fresh start and have access to broad, individualised, relevant academic and vocational curriculums. RHK EDUCATION has a number of pupils from black and ethnic minority backgrounds and aims to ensure they all have equality of opportunity both within alternative education provision and in relation to extracurricular activities available.

To achieve our aims, we will adopt the following methods:

- Embedding equality within teaching and resources
- Using key data indicators to understand the needs and characteristics of our alternative education provision
- Promoting community cohesion
- Promoting parental engagement
- Investing in regular staff training
- Using key data, such as measures of wellbeing, to monitor the progress of pupils with protected characteristics
- Regularly reviewing our policy to ensure it reflects current trends and issues

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory and good practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act and schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children'
- DfE (2018) 'Gender separation in mixed schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Equality Act 2010: advice for schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2025) ' Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2025

This policy operates in conjunction with the following alternative education provision policies:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Admissions Procedure
- Anti-bullying Policy: Pupils
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- SEMH Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The board of directors will:

- Be responsible for ensuring the alternative education provision complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure pupils and potential pupils will not be discriminated against, harassed or victimised in relation to:
    - Admissions.
    - The way the alternative education provision provides and education for pupils.
    - How pupils are provided with access to benefits, facilities and services.
    - The exclusion of a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- Ensure all policies are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans in collaboration with the head of centre.

The head of centre will:

- Implement and champion this policy, ensuring that all staff and pupils apply its guidelines fairly in all situations.
- Conduct regular training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge.
- Review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.
- Ensure that appropriate counselling is made available for pupils who require immediate interventions, parental assistance and personal counselling.

Staff will:

- Be alert to the possible harassment of pupils, both inside and outside of the alternative education provision, and to deal with incidents of harassment and/or discrimination as the highest priority.
- Carry out their statutory duties relating to equal opportunities and inclusivity, and pertaining to their specific roles.
- Have due regard to the sensitivities of all pupils, and not provide material that may cause offence.
- Act as a role model for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole alternative education provision community.

3. Protected characteristics

We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of their:

- Sex.
- Race.
- Age.
- Disability, which includes mental health, encompassing prejudiced assumptions, attitudes or behaviours related to mental health.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy or maternity.

We will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent, with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated.

We will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic which they are believed to have, even if the belief is mistaken.

4. Sex

For the purpose of this policy, sex refers a pupil’s biological assignment at birth depending on their reproductive organs. We understand some pupils identify as a gender different to the one they were assigned at birth, and we will support pupils through their transitioning phases.

We will ensure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to pupils of other sexes.

RHK EDUCATION will only separate pupils by sex where there is reasonable justification for doing so, or if one of the following applies:

- Pupils will suffer a disadvantage connected to their sex
- One sex has needs that are different from the needs of the other sex
- Participation in an activity by pupils of one sex is disproportionately low

RHK EDUCATION will consider non-statutory exceptions on a case-by-case basis, and regularly review the impact of any separation to ascertain whether it remains lawful.

Pupils will be offered equal opportunities to undertake any activity in the alternative education provision, e.g. in relation to technology lessons, all pupils will be allowed to choose which skills they learn.

There may be occasions where we deem it necessary to teach some subjects in single-sex classes, but we will ensure that such classes do not give pupils a disadvantage when compared to pupils of the other sex in other classes. Occasions where pupils are separated to be taught in single-sex classes will be documented and the separation justified to ensure parents, Ofsted and, where necessary, the wider community can understand the reasons behind separation. Where a subject is taught in a single-sex class, trans pupils will be allowed to attend the single-sex class that corresponds with the gender they identify with.

Pupils' age and stage of development will be taken into consideration before segregating sports teams. Both sexes will have equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities; where separation is deemed necessary, the single-sex sports teams will receive the same quality and amount of resources.

5. Race and ethnicity

We will ensure that pupils of all races and ethnicities are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils, regularly reviewing our alternative education provision practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will ensure pupils with EAL are treated equally and fairly, while ensuring they are supported at all times.

We will not segregate pupils on the basis of their race or ethnicity, understanding that claims of 'separate but equal' will not be tolerated, and that such actions will always be viewed as direct discrimination.

We may, however, take positive action, e.g. organising open days for pupils and families of a specific race that is under-represented, to address the particular challenges affecting pupils of one racial or ethnic group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

6. Disability

We will ensure that pupils with disabilities are not singled out or treated less favourably than other pupils simply because they have a disability, which includes any mental health issue, regularly reviewing our alternative education provision practices to ensure they are fair.

We will avoid implementing rules that could have an adverse effect on pupils with disabilities (e.g. by making physical fitness a basis for admission, or asking all pupils to deliver a presentation, as this could be unfair towards pupils with anxiety), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

We will ensure that we do not discriminate against pupils with disabilities because of something which is a consequence of their disability (for example, by not allowing a pupil on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for them to get in and out), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

We will make any reasonable adjustments, and provide any auxiliary aids, necessary to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with disabilities, especially where the pupil also has SEND but does not have a SEND statement or EHC plan.

We will meet our duty to undertake accessibility planning for pupils with disabilities and ensure that an Accessibility Plan is implemented and reviewed where necessary.

RHK EDUCATION adheres to our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for pupils with SEND.

We will ensure that any medical conditions related to a pupil with a protected characteristic is fully supported in line with our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

7. Religion and belief

We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their religion or belief, regularly reviewing our alternative education provision practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will ensure that pupils are provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith, e.g. to perform their daily prayers.

Absences in relation to religious observances will be handled in accordance with the alternative education provision's Attendance and Absence Policy.

RHK EDUCATION will liaise with local religious leaders of all faiths to inform the amount of leave pupils will be granted in relation to religious observance.

8. Sexual orientation

We will ensure that all gay, lesbian and bisexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bisexual parents, are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils, regularly reviewing our alternative education provision practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will ensure that pupils are taught about the nature of marriage, including same-sex marriage, by presenting the facts of English and Welsh law – teachers will not offer personal

opinions when discussing marriage in RSHE. We will educate pupils on positive relationships, families and gender identities within the LGBTQ+ community. RSHE lessons will be taught in accordance with our Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

We will ensure that any religious beliefs with regards to sexual orientation are taught to pupils in an educational context, in a manner that is not prejudicial or discriminatory.

We will support LGBTQ+ pupils to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

We will ensure that there is a designated safe space within our alternative education provision where pupils can discuss issues of sexual orientation without fear of discrimination.

9. Gender reassignment

We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably in relation to gender reassignment, i.e. because they are trans or have trans parents, siblings or other family members. We will regularly check our alternative education provision practices to ensure that they are fair in this regard. We recognise that gender reassignment does not necessarily involve physical change, and can be solely social and emotional.

We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for treatment and support of trans pupils by external sources, e.g. charities such as Stonewall. Any such absences will be recorded accurately and sensitively by the SENCO to ensure the privacy of the pupil.

Pupils have the right to dress in accordance with their true gender identity within the constraints of our dress code, outlined in our Pupils handbook.

We will ensure that there are suitable toilet and changing facilities for pupils to use, including:

- Unisex/gender-neutral toilets and changing facilities.
- Gender-specific toilets and changing facilities.
- Private changing facilities.

The facilities will be made available to all pupils and pupils can use the facility they feel most comfortable in, e.g. if a trans pupil wished to use a private changing room.

We will support trans pupils to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

We will ensure that there is a designated safe space within our alternative education provision where trans pupils can discuss issues of gender without fear of discrimination.

10. Pregnancy and maternity

We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they become pregnant, have recently given birth, have children or are breastfeeding.

We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for the treatment and support of pupils who are pregnant or have just given birth.

To ensure all alternative education provision-age parents and pregnant pupils are properly supported and the alternative education provision can fulfil its duty of care, the school will work with Social Care and the Local Authority to ensure a full and thorough risk assessment is completed on a per pupil basis.

11. Looked-after children (LAC)

LAC and previously LAC (PLAC) will be given the highest priority for admissions, as per the requirements of our Admissions Policy.

We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they are looked after, or have previously been looked after, by the state.

A personal education plan will be created and implemented for all LAC and PLAC, to ensure that their education and development needs are fully covered, including appropriate transition and catch-up support to ensure that they do not fall behind.

We will ensure that any SEND that LAC or PLAC have are duly taken into account and addressed, whether this is with or without a SEND statement or EHC plan.

The alternative education provision adheres to our LAC Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for LAC.

12. The curriculum

We believe that pupils should be exposed to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial, and will not make any unjustified changes to our curriculum content on the grounds of any protected characteristics that a pupil may have. We will ensure, however, that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way that prevents discrimination and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes.

To ensure equality, diversity and acceptance are taught and promoted throughout each subject area:

- Discussion of stereotypes
- Discussion about different cultures
- Visiting speakers (in person or remote) from different cultures
- Differentiation
- Personal Identity Project
- Racisms project
- Black and Ethnic Minority literature selection
- Black History Month
- Mental Health Awareness Month
- Hello Yellow Day
- Challenging prejudices

The observation of inclusive teaching strategies is a key aspect of the SLT's annual programme of monitoring.

We will respect the right of parents to withdraw their child from sex education.

13. Promoting inclusion

We will promote inclusion and equality at RHK EDUCATION through:

- Ensuring that pupils are called by their preferred names, which may be different from their legal names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.
- Ensuring, as far as possible, that our board of directors, SLT and staff reflect the full diversity of our local community.
- Providing an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- Instilling in pupils an awareness of prejudice, giving them confidence that it can, and must, be eradicated.
- Providing a variety of educational and residential visits that expose pupils to a wide range of cultural experiences.
- Ensuring equal access to opportunities, such as extracurricular activities and the curriculum.
- Taking care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
- Valuing the cultural experiences and contributions of all pupils, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.
- Communicating our policy to parents to gain their understanding, agreement and support for its provisions.
- Discussing equality issues as an agenda item for the alternative education provision council.
- Promoting equality of opportunity within the wider society.
- Ensuring admission arrangements will not unfairly disadvantage a pupil from a particular social or racial group, or with SEND.

14. Pupils that have left alternative education provision

Our responsibility to not discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left alternative education provision. It will continue to apply with regard to subsequent actions related to our previous relationship with the pupil, such as the provision of references.

15. The Public Sector Equality Duty

We will meet our duty to publish:

- Annual information to demonstrate how the alternative education provision is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding pupils who have any of the protected characteristics outlined in section 3.
- Equality objectives (at least every four years) outlining how we may further equality in our alternative education provision.

There are some protected characteristics where statistical data is less likely to be readily available, and pupils will not be pressured into providing information related to any characteristic which they may identify with.

16. Bullying and discrimination

Our Anti-bullying Policy: Pupils will be used in conjunction with this policy in order to prevent, and effectively deal with, any discriminatory incidents.

Any incidents of a child protection or safeguarding nature will be reported, recorded and dealt with in line with the process in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

It the responsibility of the head of centre to decide whether it is appropriate to notify social services and/or the police of any incident.

Concerns with regards to the handling of bullying and discrimination incidents will be dealt with via the procedures outlined in our Complaints Procedures Policy.

17. Staff training

New staff will receive relevant training on the provisions of this policy during their induction.

Whole-alternative education provision staff training for will be delivered in-house on at least an annual basis.

Staff will receive the appropriate equalities training that will:

- Focus on staff specialisms in relation to equality, for example, a focus on homophobic bullying to address a planned approach towards inclusion.
- Ensure all staff are aware of, and comply with, current equalities legislation and government recommendations.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can support pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide support for teachers to effectively manage any discrimination towards pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide up-to-date information on the terms, concepts and current understandings relating to each of the protected characteristics.
- Develop appropriate strategies for communication between parents, educators and pupils about any issues related to a protected characteristic.
- Ensure that the alternative education provision is aware of, and participates in, relevant awareness days, such as Black History Month, World Disability Day, Transgender Day of Remembrance, Pride, and International Women's Day.

18. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the head of centre, the quality consultant and directors annually and updated where appropriate – any amendments will be duly communicated to staff.

This policy will next be reviewed on August 2026.