

What is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)?

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single, general duty for public bodies, including schools, and which extends to all 'protected characteristics' – race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. The three main elements of the Act are to:

1. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

It should be noted that age is a relevant characteristic for schools when considering their duties as an employer but not in relation to pupils.

The PSED replaces the previous three sets of separate duties to promote disability, race and gender equality. All schools must have 'due regard' to the three elements listed above. Therefore, whenever significant decisions are being made, or policies being developed or reviewed, the school will consider carefully the equalities implications.

How does Hazel Grove High School comply with the PSED?

The school has a range of policies which make explicit the school's commitment to actively promoting equality of opportunity for all including:

- Trust Equality Policy
- Trust SEND Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Anti-Racism Charter
- School Accessibility Plan
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

The main Legal Frameworks that need to be considered are:

- Equality Act 2010
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

PSED in Practice at Hazel Grove High School

We believe there are valuable links between the three elements of the Act and the Rights of the Child.

Eliminate discrimination

The protection from discrimination applies in a number of ways:

- **Direct Discrimination:** Where someone is treated less favourably because they have a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by Association:** Where someone is treated less favourably because of their connection with a person with a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by Perception:** Where someone is treated less favourably because it is perceived that they have a protected characteristic.

- Indirect Discrimination: Where the application of a criterion or practice puts individuals sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

The school serves an area of diverse social backgrounds with some students coming from more advantaged backgrounds and others from more disadvantaged backgrounds. We anticipate that the percentage of children from ethnic minority backgrounds will be lower than the national average and similarly the percentage of children for whom English is not their first language (Bilingual Learners).

Tracking of all pupil outcomes takes place in a structured, systematic way and the school will intervene if there are any indications of underachievement, low attainment or concerns about specific groups or individuals.

Monitoring and evaluation, and the analysis of data, takes place across the school and is used to inform strategic planning. Assessment data informs the school's priorities for ongoing improvement and development.

We actively encourage desired values and attitudes amongst our school community, including attitudes towards students and staff and expect everyone to treat others with dignity and respect. There is regular consideration of the ways in which the academic and electives curricula will help to promote an awareness of British Values and the UNC Rights of the Child and develop skills of participation and responsible action.

Bullying and prejudice-related incidents are carefully monitored and dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy. All staff engage with regular Professional Learning to ensure that they implement policy consistently and are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying. We expect that all staff will be role-models for equal opportunities, deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents fairly and be able to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping. We will ensure that staff are aware of their legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, the different forms of discrimination and what 'reasonable adjustments' mean in practice.

1. Advance equality of opportunity

The school is committed to advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and has put a range of approaches in place to ensure that this happens.

The school monitors and evaluates, frequently and regularly, the attainment and progress of all students and analyses the performance of particular groups who share a protected characteristic to compare their performance with those who do not share it. Interventions are then planned and implemented in order to address any disparities in performance.

Examples of practice which advances equality of opportunity:

- We ensure the curriculum is accessible to all pupils with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities (SEND). School Focused Plans (SFPs) ensure continuous and rigorous planning and reflection in collaboration with parents and carers to ensure that no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- Where necessary, we use Trust specialists along with the services of outside agencies to support families and individual pupils. Our most vulnerable pupils and pupils with SEND/Medical needs are fully supported by our SENDCo, teaching staff and external specialist professionals. We take every opportunity to promote and advance equality when planning curriculum intent, implementation and impact.
- We do everything we can to meet the needs of all students by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments to ensure the school environment and its activities are as accessible and inclusive as possible for students (Article 23), staff and visitors to the school. We are committed to ensuring staff with a disability have equality of opportunity.

- We will actively develop links with local primary schools to ensure a smooth transition into Year 7. We will engage with the services of the Stockport Safeguarding Team and Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) for students who need this type of expert support.

2. Foster good relations across all characteristics

The school adopts a wide range of approaches to foster good relations across all characteristics. Some specific examples are as follows:

- The school will participate in fund raising for charities supporting local, national and global issues, which are understood and supported by students.
- The strong global dimension of our academic curriculum, along with the school's electives curriculum, develops our students' awareness of different countries and cultures.
- We are actively developing links with local faith organisations and invite people of faith to lead our assemblies.
- Trustees and governors demonstrate a high level of engagement with the school in areas such as the personal development of pupils, SEND and equality. They monitor the inclusive nature of our school and the well-being of staff and pupils (including attendance and behaviour).

We are committed to increasing the variety of extra-curricular clubs along with experiences and opportunities provided through our electives curriculum for all students. The impact of this is that all students can experience enhanced activities additional to the statutory curriculum and in doing so develop their cultural capital.

We use Twitter and a range of media sources to engage with the outside world at a global level and the vision of the Personal Development curriculum is to prepare students to become global citizens.

Our Equality Objectives Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) the school is required to set Equality Objectives. Our published information must be updated annually, and objectives published at least once every four years.

Objective 1:

To 'nurture lifelong learners who are confident and ready to embrace the challenges and opportunities of the outside world' and where our Trust Vision 'For everyone, regardless of background or circumstance, to be inspired, to thrive in all environments, to recognise what it takes to succeed, to set aspirational goals and work hard to achieve them' can be realised.

Objective 2: To ensure that all school policies are reviewed with regard for PSED.

Objective 3: To ensure that staff induction and Professional Learning includes raising awareness of, and developing staff understanding about, their responsibilities under the Equality Act.

Objective 4: To establish and develop understanding about our four Drivers (Cornerstones, QAH, Leadership Guiding Principles, Professional Learning) throughout our school community.

Definitions

The protected characteristics can be defined as:

- **Age:** Applies to all age groups.
- **Disability:** A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out day to day activities.
- **Gender Reassignment:** Protection applies from the point at which someone proposes to live as another gender.

- **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** Applies to married couples, or same sex couples in a civil partnership.
- **Maternity and Pregnancy:** A person who is pregnant or recently given birth: maternity covers the period of 26 weeks after birth.
- **Race:** Includes colour, ethnic origins, nationality and race.
- **Religion or Belief:** Applies to religions with a clear structure and belief system. Belief applies to religious or philosophical beliefs, or a lack of belief.
- **Sex:** Applies to men and women.
- **Sexual Orientation:** Applies to people attracted to the same sex, the opposite sex, or both sexes.

The Equality Act also provides protection from:

- **Harassment** (related to a relevant protected characteristic)
Harassment is defined as behaviour that subjects a person to unwanted conduct, which has the purpose, or effect, of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

- **Victimisation**

This occurs when an employee is treated unfavourably because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act, or because they are suspected of doing so.

Reasonable adjustments: A reasonable adjustment requires a school to take positive steps to ensure that disabled pupils can fully participate in the education provided by the school, and that they can enjoy other benefits, facilities and services that the school provides for pupils.

Positive action and positive discrimination: New provisions in the Act allow schools to make positive action in relation to pupils and members of staff with certain protected characteristics who may be disadvantaged for social or economic reasons to do with past or present discrimination. Any such action must be a proportionate way of achieving a legitimate aim. Positive action is not the same as positive discrimination. Positive discrimination is always unlawful except in the case of disability.