

<b>Policy Name: Equality and Objectives Statement (GHES)</b>	
Last updated:	December 2024
Date of next review:	November 2028
Member of staff responsible for the policy:	Beth Warren, Dave Rumsey
Dissemination of the policy:	Management Committee, staff, website

**GHES and GCC:** GHES is part of Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and, “**Equality information and objectives apply to the local authority on behalf of PRUs**” (*Statutory policies for schools DfE January 2014*) Gloucestershire County Council has published Equality Objectives for 2023-2027. These objectives are reviewed annually and the county council publishes equality reports. The aim of this GHES policy and objectives is to sit alongside the overarching county council policy and objectives which are very broad. Our purpose in creating a local equality policy and objectives are to keep the issue of equality as a priority and as relevant as possible to our particular setting. Our aim will be to support the overarching aims and objectives of the rest of the Local Authority.

As such the GHES policy should be read in conjunction with GCC’s policy and approach as outlined in their own documentation [‘Equalities and our duties under the Equality Act \(2010\)’](#).

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies. The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the statutory duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The legal and local framework for this policy is:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Education and Inspections Act 2006

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Procedure



- Data Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Sex & Relationships Education
- Accessibility Plan

The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

For the purpose of this policy, the Equality Act 2010 will be referred to as 'the Act'. The school fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities. Protected characteristics, under the Act, are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Race including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

This policy explains how we aim to listen to and involve students, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

### **Aims and Values**

Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same. We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

Our aim is to:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes<sup>1</sup>. Issues relating to adults within our service can be embraced under these themes and reflected in the action plan.

### **Our Approach**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>



We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of GHES, within all aspects of GHES life.

**We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the GHES Vision:**

**Our Mission**

We are dedicated to transforming the learning experience for young people with mental and physical health needs whilst they are unable to attend their main school.

We provide education and support, tailored to each student's unique challenges.

We champion resilience, academic success, and overall well-being, ensuring that all students can thrive both academically and personally.

**Our Vision**

To provide an inclusive, nurturing and high-quality education that is flexible and responsive to each student's needs, empowering all to thrive both academically and emotionally.

**Our Core Values**

**Nurture** – We see and nurture every child's unique qualities.

**Confidence** – We build confidence and self-esteem so everyone can flourish.

**Determination** – We are determined to remove barriers to enable students to thrive and achieve.

**Care** – We educate with care and empathy.

**Safe** – We provide an environment that allows everyone to feel safe.

**Our Duties**

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole service in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all (with and without protected characteristics)<sup>2</sup>. We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately, negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between different groups of pupils and the wider school community.

**We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of GHES both in the GRH schoolroom and through the Outpatient Team. These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, (dependent on our current priorities).**

- learning and teaching across the curriculum
- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- school policies
- Management committee meetings
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach
- enrichment activities
- The GHES PSHE offer
- Additional opportunities outside of our Core offer such as Connect, Reading for Pleasure, Wellbeing, Engagement, Therapeutic Play
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education



- staff and pupil welfare

## **The roles and responsibilities within our school community**

Our Head of Service will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors are engaged in the ongoing development of and informed about our service as a whole
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to information and training which helps to implement the policy
- monitor the policy and report to the Management Committee at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our Management Committee will:

- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the Development Plan
- support the head of service in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy the service as a whole
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years.

Our Senior Leadership Team and team leaders will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this Policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy
- with the head of service, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the Development Plan

Our students will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy

Our parents/carers will:

- be given opportunities to become involved in the ongoing development of the Policy
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

GHES staff will:

- be involved in the ongoing development of the Policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole service issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements.

## **Our Staff**

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, support workers and administrators) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to work towards our workforce reflecting that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act

we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made<sup>3</sup> or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure. We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment:

Our staff team have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

### **Addressing prejudice-related incidents**

GHES is opposed to all forms of prejudice. The service will ensure that students and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice. The service will address any incidents immediately and, where appropriate, report them accordingly. Any reports of bullying and prejudice will be carefully monitored and dealt with appropriately. Training will be given to all staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.

### **Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

The policy will be available on the GHES website, parents and all stakeholders updated through our internal communications. The policy will be discussed and shared through the wellbeing curriculum with students.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our management committee who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives. We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

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<sup>3</sup> Unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work



## **EQUALITY OBJECTIVES: 2024-2028**

### **Equality objectives**

We seek that our equality objectives make a real difference, promote opportunity and fairness whilst supporting people to fulfil their potential. Setting equality objectives helps the council achieve this goal by placing a focus on equality issues with the intention of improving outcomes for one or more of the protected characteristics.

### **Equality Objectives 2024 – 2028**

A self -assessment against the Equality Framework for Local Government was undertaken in 2022. That self-assessment was undertaken over a period of several months and included engagement and consultation with the Councils Employee Networks with the Member Equality Champions. This led to the following recommendations:

- To strengthen leadership, oversight and governance of equalities, diversity and inclusion across the council
- Improve the quality and consistency of the data we collect on service user and workforce equality characteristics.
- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion within GCC's culture and ways of working.
- Community engagement: develop an infrastructure that enables the council to hear from communities and engage effectively with them.

It has been agreed that this will be the council's new equality objectives (2023-2027) as it broadly encompasses the principles of the Public Sector Equality Duty on public bodies to:

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

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.	Within the GHES PSHE curriculum students are taught about the Equality Act 2010 and the GHES Equality policy. Throughout the entire PSHE curriculum at GHES, we implicitly provide students with the opportunity to discuss and evaluate topics such as diversity, equality, discrimination, harassment and victimisation and also provide explicit lessons in these topic areas. Picture News is used every Monday, in the School Room at GRH, to discuss all the above through Oracy Starters.
	GHES provide positive role models for our students. All adults within GHES interact and go about our day-to-day roles with the highest expectations and we promote positive relationships and actions. GHES staff are expected to challenge any language or actions that undermine the elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.  Our Link Tutors actively seek to secure student voice and provide regular opportunities for their students to share their experiences at GHES

	<p>and beyond, enabling students to share any concerns or questions linked to discrimination, harassment and other prohibited conduct. Exam Access Arrangements are secured according to the regulations set out by the Joint Council of Regulations to ensure that all of our students with disabilities that impact on their ability to access examinations are not discriminated against.</p>
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	<p>Within the PSHE curriculum the following statements are both general threads that inform teaching sequences but are also addressed within explicit lessons planned to address them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About respecting the differences and similarities between people and recognising what they have in common with others e.g. physically, in personality or background</li> <li>• To listen and respond respectfully to a wide range of people, including those whose traditions, beliefs and lifestyle are different to their own</li> </ul> <p>All students with GHES have a student support plan put into place upon admission. The support plans put in strategies that seek to overcome any barriers to learning and advance the equality of opportunity for all students irrespective of protected characteristics and those students who do not. Within teaching and pastoral sessions, a range of positive role models and case studies of people with protected characteristics are used to support teaching, such as within the English curriculum where specific texts are selected to draw on characters with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Both within GHES sessions and in our day-to-day interactions there are opportunities to actively challenge stereotypes. Protected characteristics are a regular feature of Picture News discussions every Monday in GRH School Room. The Hospital Chaplain also visits the School Room each Thursday to share beliefs and traditions from a wide variety of faiths.</p> <p>Our Connect and Reading for Pleasure sessions reach beyond age and protected characteristics and are open to all students to provide them with the opportunity to meet their peers despite their disability, health or learning needs.</p> <p>Our specialist Careers Teacher actively works with our students around declaring their disability to ensure that they secure appropriate support and recognition at transition points.</p> <p>Specific staff are experienced and trained to support our young mums when with GHES to ensure that they have equality of opportunity both within the service as well as advocating on their behalf externally.</p>
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	<p>Our admissions policy facilitates GHES to support students with a health barrier that prevents them from accessing their parent school. GHES welcomes students according to our admissions policy and irrespective of protected characteristics and none.</p> <p>Under the Equality Act, disability is defined as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'</p> <p>Significant numbers of our students fit the definition above. Our groupings naturally bring students with protective characteristics and none and students who have a disability or not together in a safe, supported learning environment. The GRH School Room invites pupils with a</p>

diversity of need to work together in a range of subjects.

The vision for GHES is 'to provide an inclusive, nurturing and high-quality education that is flexible and responsive to each student's needs, empowering all to thrive both academically and emotionally' - all of our sessions and interactions intrinsically support and foster good relations between all students and adults.



