

# Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College

## Public Sector Equality Duty Statement 2024 - 2026

### Introduction

HCCS is committed to meeting its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

### Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation and guidance:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives
- Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).

### Roles and responsibilities

#### The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher
- Appoint a nominated equality link governor who will:
  - o Meet with the executive headteacher and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
  - o Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
  - o Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
  - o Report back to the full governing board regarding any issues

#### The executive headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors
- Appoint a designated member or members of staff champions for equality who will:

- Support the executive headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Meet with the equality nominated link governor to raise and discuss any issues, support the executive headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary
- Appoint a champion for equality within the student leadership team

**All staff** are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in this document.

### **Eliminating discrimination**

HCCS is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act – for example, during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training.

HCCS will have equality champions appointed from the governing board, the staff of the academy and within the student leadership team who collectively monitor equality issues. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

### **Advancing equality of opportunity**

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the academy aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

## **Fostering good relations**

HCCS aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues where pupils will be encouraged to take a lead
- Working with our local community and with our student council working to enhance the feeling of citizenship
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the academy's activities, such as sports clubs
- Develop links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

## **Equality considerations in decision-making**

Academy staff ensure they have due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. The academy always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

The school keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

## **Equality objectives**

It is important to set a number of objectives that will help the school to work towards meeting its commitments in this statement.

### **Objective 1**

Following an independent review of accessibility to the school site and facilities, monitor progress on implementing the issues identified and ensure that any financial implications are considered within the budget setting process.

We have chosen this objective as this has been an ongoing process aimed at ensuring that access to our school and facilities is achievable for all students, staff and visitors. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that our school is accessible to all.

To achieve this objective we have already commissioned an independent review of the full school site and developed an action plan.

The progress we are making towards this objective should be considered by the governing board via the nominated link governor.

## **Objective 2**

Offer training to all members of staff and governors involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and non-discrimination by the end of the next academic year 2022-23.

We have chosen this objective because we need to be clear and consistent in the way that we recruit staff and ensure that our processes promote HCCS as a model employer across as parts of society.

To achieve this objective we will provide training for all staff involved at any stage of the recruitment and selection process for new employees or for internal appointments. We will, by the end of the next school year 2022-23, ensure that all recruitment panels include at least one member who has been fully trained in safer recruitment practices.

In addition, all staff and governors will undertake mandatory safeguarding training.

The progress we are making towards this objective should be considered by the governing board via the nominated link governor.

## **Objective 3**

Include the 'Two Ticks' positive about people with disabilities symbol on all job adverts, application forms and information by January of next year 2025, to help address the under-representation of people with disabilities in the school workforce.

We have chosen this objective because of the need to positively promote our school as an equal opportunities employer across all groups in our community and the wider society.

To achieve this objective we will complete the process of gaining and maintaining the 'two ticks' accreditation.

The progress we are making towards this objective should be considered by the governing board via the nominated link governor.

## **Objective 4**

Ensure that within our behaviour policies that define acceptable and unacceptable behaviour expected by students in our academy, that they are assessed against the aims of this document. This includes issues of bullying and any other behaviours that would impact negatively on the experience of all students.

We have chosen this objective because of the need to positively promote acceptable behaviours as we prepare our students to fulfil their potential within society. Students will feel safe and included in all aspects of school life and will not be discriminated against for any reason.

To achieve this objective we will consider equality in all aspects of behaviour management and will take a zero tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and discrimination in any form.

The progress we are making towards this objective should be considered by the governing board via the nominated link governor.

## **Progress statement summer 2024**

During the school year, the trust has continued to make good progress against its stated objectives in relation to the Public Sector Equality Duty Statement 2024 - 2026. During the year ahead, 2024/25, the governing board will review and report on progress against the objectives at its meeting in June 2025 and in June each year from that point. The date in summer 2025 will mark the halfway point of this reporting period.

Following extensive redevelopments on the school site over the past three years and on the completion of a new teaching block containing 10 new classrooms, a whole site review and accessibility re-audit has been carried out. The governing board will review and consider progress in managing accessibility in the second term of the school year.

## **Progress report January 2024**

### **1. Changes in governance**

The Public Sector Equality Duty Statement is reviewed by the governing board every four years and the next review is due in 2026. However, following the change to the governance structure of the governing board, the sub-committee that looked at progress against the objectives, no longer exists. Therefore, the governing board will receive annual updates on progress towards meeting the objectives set out in the statement. A nominated ink governor will champion the work at board level. The statement has been modified to represent these changes.

### **2. Objective 1 - Accessibility audit**

Work on implementing improvements to the site have continued with examples being:

- Disabled parking bays have been reviewed and re-marked
- New reception completed with wheelchair friendly access
- All steps have had high visibility markings applied
- Pedestrian crossing repainted
- Media studies facility to be re-provided on ground floor
- Reaudit booked for April 2024

### **3. Objective 2 - Recruitment and selection**

- All recruitment panels now include at least one member who is safer recruitment trained.
- All governors involved in recruitment have now undertaken the training

### **4. Objective 3 - Two ticks**

On investigation, the previous accreditation scheme has been replaced by the Disability Confident scheme which is backed by the government. Mrs Bradney, HR Manager is investigating the opportunity around the scheme and will report back with a proposal.

#### **5. Objective 4 - Behaviour policy**

- Following consultation in school year 2022/23, a new comprehensive behaviour policy was introduced at the start of the school year 2023/24 which has seen major improvements in the way behaviour is managed across the school.
- Following the identification of students not feeling safe in toilets, a major investment of circa £70k has improved the situation with girls and boys, upper and lower school facilities in separate locations.
- The work on behaviour and keeping children safe in our school was very positively reported in the feedback following the Ofsted inspection visit, November 2023  
*“Leaders and trustees understand their statutory duties. They ensure that relevant policies are in place and implemented effectively. These guide school practice appropriately to ensure that pupils’ welfare is always a priority. For example, when supporting pupils’ welfare through access to food, toilets and the protection of pupils’ privacy.”*