



# Equality and Community Cohesion Policy

**July 2023**

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# Equality and Community Cohesion Policy

## Our Trust Vision



### Definition and Context

By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed – both within The Golden Thread Alliance and its wider community.

The Trust Board and staff recognise that community cohesion is an important issue for the whole Trust community, given its cultural and ethnic, multi-faith, socio-economic and highly mobile pupil diverse population.

The Golden Thread Alliance aspires to reach an excellent standard of community cohesion. It has a clear understanding of what is required to promote community cohesion, based on a sound analysis – covering all three strands - of its own community and learners' needs. The Trust is taking effective action to engage with all communities outside the school itself and its local community with evident impact. Learners engage as far as possible with their peers from different ethnic and cultural, religious and non-religious and socio-economic backgrounds and understand that they share common values. The schools within The Trust effectively evaluate its contribution to community cohesion in all three strands (including faith, ethnicity and culture and socio-economic dimensions) to inform its actions.

### Legal duties

1. We welcome our duties under the Race Relations 1976 as amended by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000; the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005; and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by the Equality Act 2006.

2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

3. We recognise that these four sets of duties are essential for achieving the five outcomes

of the Every Child Matters framework, and that they reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

### **Guiding principles**

4. As a school, we are guided by seven principles.

#### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value**

We see all learners and potential learners as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever type of family they are part of
- whichever their gender.
- and regardless of their socio-economic background

#### **Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity**

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognized
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognized.
- family living arrangements so that all types of family are supported, acknowledged, recognised and celebrated.
- socio-economic background, so that pupils from less-affluent socio-economic backgrounds are not disadvantaged when accessing educational opportunities.

#### **Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment
- the acceptance and celebration of all family types
- involvement from people from all socio-economic backgrounds

#### **Principle 4: Staff recruitment, retention and development**

Policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whichever their gender or sexuality.
- regardless of their socio-economic background

#### **Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, we take opportunities to maximize positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men of all genders and sexual identities

- People from different socio-economic backgrounds.

### **Principle 6: We consult widely**

When we seek pupil, parental, staff or other stakeholder opinions on existing practices or if consult them on new aspects of school life, we involve:

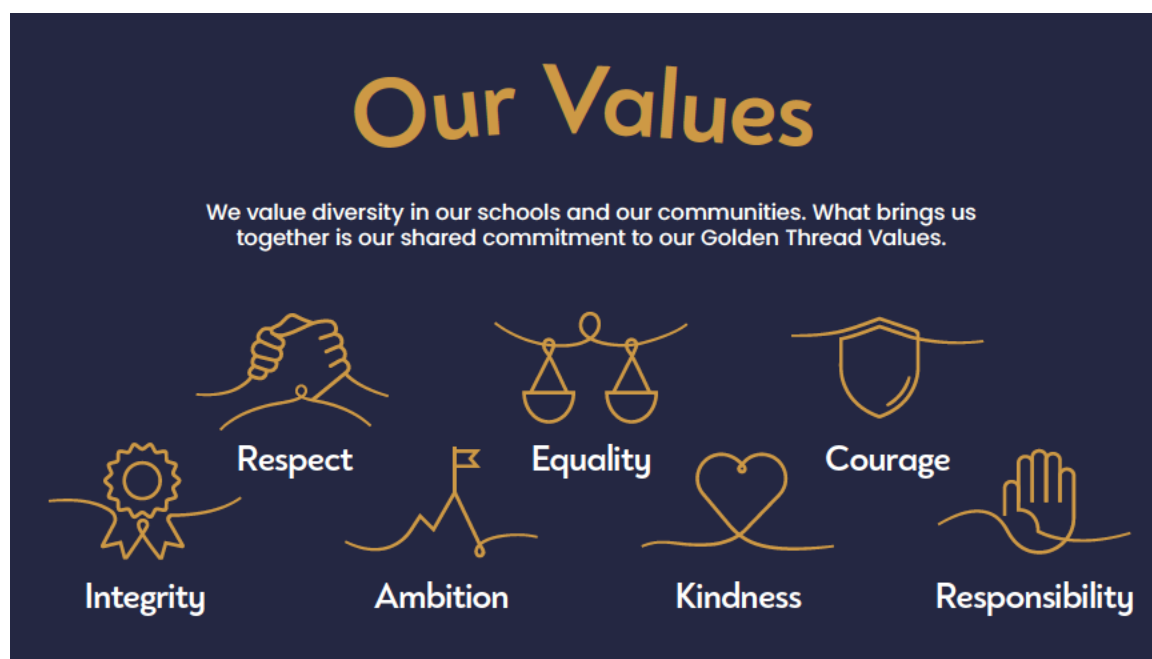
- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys of all sexual identities
- people from a range of socio-economic backgrounds

### **Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit**

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit the school and local community as a whole, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious background
- both women and men, girls and boys of all sexual identities
- people of different socio-economic backgrounds

### **Our Values and Pledges**



As a Trust, we are committed to demonstrate our commitment to equality and community cohesion, through our well-defined values and our Pledges.

Our values, which include “equality” are there to guide the behaviours and culture in each of our communities and will be regularly monitored through “culture walks” by the CEO.

Our values are:

- **Respect:** We respect everyone, no matter who they are or where they come from.
- **Equality:** We value each person, celebrate our differences and give everyone all that they need to thrive.
- **Courage:** We keep trying, even when things are hard.
- **Integrity:** We are always honest with others and ourselves.
- **Ambition:** We set high expectations and work hard to meet them.

- Kindness: We look after those around us.
- Responsibility: We share credit when things go well and take ownership when times are tough.

Our Pledges are our “promises” to the following groups of children, families and staff – specifically related to our Pledge Groups, which reflect the specified groups, earlier on in this policy:

- Our Black pupils and families
- Children living in different families
- Children with special education needs and disabilities
- Children and families who are “pupil premium” or eligible for free school meals
- Looked after and previously looked after children

These specific pledges are made to ensure that our work with these groups is always at the forefront of our thinking, with the intention of creating a more equitable school and wider community.

### **Curriculum Development**

The SEF (School’s Self Evaluation) will consider the context of the school in respect of all key strands relating to community cohesion (namely, faith, ethnicity and culture, and socio-economic factors) and will contrast the school community with local and national communities.

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles listed in section 4.

### **Ethos and organisation**

We ensure that the principles listed in section 4 above apply also to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- learners' progress, attainment and assessment
- learners' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

### **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying**

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

There are procedures in place about how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

We take seriously our obligation to report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents in our Trust and how they were dealt with.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Chair of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

The Trust board are responsible for overseeing the work undertaken by the Local Governing Committee, and is also ultimately responsible for the implementation and adherence to this policy across the whole Trust.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

### **Religious observance**

The Golden Thread Alliance respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice, inline with the staff absence policy.

### **Staff development and training**

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

### **Breaches of the policy**

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

We collect, analyse and use assessment data in relation to achievement, which can be broken down (when required) according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, language, religious affiliation, national origin and gender.

In order to monitor the impact of this policy, the School will evaluate the actions it has taken to develop community cohesion.