



Gosfield School

Equality and Diversity Policy (Including LGBTQ+)

This policy should be read in conjunction with our School's Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy, SEND, and our Anti-Bullying Policy, Anti-Racism Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Admissions Policy and our Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Gosfield School is a fully inclusive school. We firmly believe that all stakeholders should feel safe, respected, valued and secure when attending this school. It sets out the School's approach to children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning and related issues in line with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010:

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 stipulates that schools have a duty to promote the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in their care, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and gender questioning students and those experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) bullying. DoFE KCSIE 2026.

Equality Act 2010 Schools are required to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender reassignment. This includes tackling HBT bullying. Schools are also required to promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This means that schools should take proactive steps to promote respect and understanding of LGBTQ+ people and issues.

Definition: LGBTQ+ has been an accepted acronym since 1996; it may refer to anyone who is non-heterosexual or non-cisgender, and not exclusively to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. To recognise this inclusion, a popular variant adds the letter Q for those who identify as queer or are questioning their sexual identity,

AIMS

Our aim is to celebrate and support the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of students' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This Diversity and Inclusion Policy extends to adults: staff, parents and carers. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, giving due regard to groups with 'protected characteristics', in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership, in accordance with the Act.

Gosfield School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians, students and staff have an important role in supporting the whole school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they cooperate closely together. We treat all our students and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to show similar consideration in all dealings with each other, the staff and the School. All students are entitled to a full-time education that is free from discrimination and harassment, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The learning environment in which our students engage should be supportive, safe and welcoming to diversity regarding sexuality and gender. Equally, all staff are entitled to a safe and welcoming workplace in which they are not discriminated against or treated unfairly. This policy has been created with an aim to consistently reduce stigmatisation, and improve the educational integration, of individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or other protected identities (LGBTQ+). We will provide continuous support and foster a learning environment that is free from harassment and discrimination, regardless of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or gender expression. Promote healthy communication between staff, students and parents to support the successful education, development and wellbeing of all students, and the inclusion and wellbeing of all staff. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, bullying and harassment and will make every effort to comply with the requirements of the Act and its subsequent provisions.

VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

*"In April 2024 the publication of the **Cass Review** highlighted the importance that schools take a cautious approach to teaching about this sensitive topic, and do not use any materials that present contested views as fact, including the view that gender is a spectrum. This is in line with the Department's gender questioning guidance, which also takes a cautious approach to assist teachers in ensuring they are acting in the best interests of children." Any request relating to social transition must be carefully considered, documented and supported by a clear rationale that reflects the best interests of the child and the wider pupil community. Schools must not initiate social transition but should be considered when a child or parent raises a request. Parents should normally be involved where a child is questioning their gender, unless, informing parents could place the child at risk of harm. Social transition may involve changes to a pupil's name, pronouns, uniform or appearance, this is at the discretion of the Principal and teachers do not have to act on the request to changes of pronouns.*

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in education, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. This policy is therefore underpinned by the following values, principles and standards:

- Equality and social justice;
- Acknowledging and valuing diversity;
- Respect for others;
- Compliance with equal opportunities legislation;
- Elimination of all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination;
- Active challenge to stereotypes, prejudiced attitudes and unfair discriminatory behaviour;
- Commitment to inclusive education which enables and supports all students to develop their full potential; however where in physical activities the risk to a child or others in cases of

physical strength and capability pose an issue, requests will be considered on an individual basis and the Principal will make an informed decision about best practise and safety for all

- Accountability for compliance with this policy by all members of the School;
- To provide an inclusive environment in which LGBTQ+ students and staff are valued and respected;
- To promote understanding of and support the needs of LGBTQ+ students and staff;
- To provide an inclusive curriculum;
- To monitor and tackle HBT language and bullying.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Equality and Diversity Policy are to:

- Develop an ethos which respects and values all people;
- Actively promote equality of opportunity;
- Prepare students for life in a diverse society;
- Promote good relations amongst people within the school community and the wider communities within which we work;
- Eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination, bullying, harassment or other oppressive behaviour through use of the School Disciplinary Procedures when required;
- Deliver equality and diversity through our school policies, procedures and practice;
- Do our utmost, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to school provision and activities;
- Take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by stereotyping and cultural expectations;

By ensuring that school policies and practices are inclusive and supportive of LGBTQ+ people and state that HBT language and bullying are unacceptable;

- By providing training to staff in supporting LGBTQ+ students, developing an LGBTQ+ inclusive curriculum and tackling HBT language and bullying;
- By providing support structures and information/resources to LGBTQ+ students on LGBTQ+ issues and support services;
- By providing students the opportunities to discuss gender identity and sexuality, and including LGBTQ+ people and themes in the PSHEE and wider curriculum;
- By providing ways for students to report HBT language and bullying, monitoring (including through staff and student surveys) and recording HBT language and bullying, as well as ensuring that students are aware that HBT language and bullying are wrong;
- By ensuring that the school assemblies or displays which celebrate diversity or tackle bullying are LGBTQ+ inclusive;
- By ensuring that unnecessarily gendered aspects of school life are avoided, having unisex facilities for example.

COMMUNICATION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

We will take active steps to communicate this Equality and Diversity Policy to all students, parents, staff, and Governors of the School. This will be part of the new staff induction process and training and refresher training for all staff and Governors.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Governors are responsible for making sure the School follows all of its equality and diversity policies and codes and meets its legal responsibilities with respect to equality.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with all equality legislation;
- Ensuring the School implements its equality and diversity policies and codes of practice;
- Following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying;
- Ensuring that appropriate records are kept of any cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying.

School SLT are responsible for:

- Putting the School's equality and diversity policies and codes into practice;
- Making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out;
- Following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying.

All staff is responsible for:

- Promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination;
- Challenging any incidents of unfair discrimination or racial, sexual or other stereotyping, perpetrated by students or other staff;
- Respecting others in their language and actions;
- Follow the School's equality and diversity policy, and the staff code of conduct.

Staff will:

- Ensure victims of bullying with regard to LGBTQ+ are listened to, taken seriously and informed of what action will be taken or support given. Give reassurance that all possible steps will be taken to ensure their safety and wellbeing;
- Act immediately and record all incidents of HBT language and bullying and speak discreetly to ensure that problems are dealt with sympathetically.
- Ensure that parents/carers are contacted and kept well informed that the matter is being dealt with.
- Raise awareness of LGBTQ+ issues/HBT bullying through assemblies, curriculum opportunities, guest speakers and displays.
- Provide students with LGBTQ+ inclusive Sex and Relationship Education opportunities to discuss gender identity and sexuality.
- Receive appropriate training in LGBTQ+ and develop a fully inclusive curriculum that tackles HBT language and bullying.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Equality and Diversity Policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure it remains compliant with Equality and Diversity legislation. Any new legislation will be included in the policy as and when it is brought into the public domain. To ensure good practice is followed SLT will:

- Monitor the progress of students of minority groups and compare this to the progress made by other students in the School;
- Monitor the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against
- Take into serious consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or students;
- Monitor the school behaviour and exclusions policy, so those students from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

What can a student do if they are being subject to LGBTQ+ abuse and discrimination?

- Do not retaliate
- Do not keep it a secret. Talk about it to a staff member, family or friends;
- Staff are here to support and they can help to decide how to handle the situation and take necessary action.

Guidelines for parents/carers:

- Parents/carers are reminded of the importance of taking an active interest in their child's school / social life
- If parents/carers think their child is being LGBTQ+ bullied or have reason to believe their child is experiencing difficulties with the LGBTQ+ agenda they should, contact the School immediately. School staff will listen to any concerns and where necessary arrange a meeting to discuss further.

PROCEDURES FOR STAFF

Any member of staff who observes an LGBTQ+ incident or to whom an LGBTQ+ incident is reported to should:

- Listen carefully to the student, give them sufficient opportunity to discuss their concerns, describe what has been happening and treat what they say seriously.
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing and thank them for either reporting the LGBTQ+ bullying themselves, and/or agreeing to discuss the matter. Give them the support by assuring them that school will take appropriate action.
- All LGBTQ+ incidents must be recorded and reported to SLT

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

- If an incident of bullying is reported, the member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation will control the situation, reassure and support the students involved.
- They will inform the Tutor and/or Head of House/ Head of Section/ Assistant Principal Pastoral as soon as possible.
- The appropriate member of staff will calmly explain the range of disciplinary measures that are potentially involved.
- A member of the pastoral team will interview the victim on their own as soon as possible. They will be interviewed separately from the alleged perpetrator and asked to give an account of events a written statement. It will be made clear to them why revenge is inappropriate. They will be offered support to develop a strategy to help them. Students

are required to write and sign an account of the incident which may be helpful to staff as the investigation progresses.

- The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually afterwards by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and asked to provide a signed written account. It will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions, as stated in the school's behaviour policy.
- The incident is recorded and passed to all relevant members of the pastoral team.
- The Assistant Principal Pastoral maintains a central log of any incidents, monitors progression and identifies patterns. Dates and details of ongoing situations are logged and the Senior Leadership Team are kept informed. A holistic picture is maintained between different aspects of school provision such as teaching and health care and the Assistant Principal Pastoral forwards relevant information to all concerned.
- All appropriate staff will be informed. In very serious incidents, the Vice Principal, Head of Prep and/or Principal will be informed.
- When necessary, the parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, will be agreed. It is important to recognise that suitable support is needed both for students who are being bullied and for students who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- Those involved will be closely monitored by the pastoral team, led by the Assistant Principal Pastoral.
- Strong sanctions such as behaviour contracts or exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying.
- A bullying incident is treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- In very serious cases, and only after the Principal has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to Social Services. However, it is the policy of Gosfield School to attempt to resolve such issues internally.

Ratified by the Governing Council of Gosfield School

Signed K Makarewicz Date: 14.9.26
Chair of Governors

Signed [Signature] Date: 14/9/26
Principal

Date of next review: September 2027