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YORK STEINER SCHOOL

INCLUSION, EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Approved by: Board of Trustees

Date: November 2021

Last reviewed on: November 2021

**Next review due
by:** November 2024

York Steiner School ('the School', 'we' or 'our') is committed to promoting and achieving equality of opportunity for all pupils, parents, carers, staff, trustees, visitors and job applicants.

The School endeavours to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.

Aims for Pupils

We aim to be educationally inclusive, where the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and the well-being of every pupil matter. It is fundamental to Steiner Waldorf education that each child is valued equally and accepted as a unique being with her or his distinctive qualities and aptitudes.

"Through recognising and addressing the unique spirit of each child, we aim to inspire in our pupils' capacity and enthusiasm to work arising out of respect and care for the many wonders of the world, for fellow human beings and for oneself." *Rudolf Steiner*

The teachers aspire to make the lessons as inclusive and differentiated as possible, whilst at all times remaining within York Steiner School and Steiner Waldorf principles.

We endeavour to apply the curriculum creatively in order to meet the needs of all the pupils, including those with disabilities and those with special educational needs, wherever possible, as well as those from all cultural backgrounds and pupils with English as an additional language. If, after exploring all avenues of support within the school, we are unable to responsibly meet the needs of a pupil we will do all we can to recommend a school that can.

It is the School's aim for all pupils to have the opportunity to access the teaching and learning which takes place in the school, according to their capacities. All pupils may have special needs at different times (including being able, gifted and talented – see *policy*) and therefore a wide variety of strategies are used to meet these needs as they arise. Learning diversity is recognised and planned for; any barriers to learning and participation

will be challenged and removed if at all possible within the confines of the school's resources and all pupils will be provided with equality of opportunity.

It is our intention that all pupils be valued and respected, irrespective of academic ability or any particular physical or emotional attributes, gender or cultural, religious, ethnic, racial or socio-economic background:

- Each individual is valued equally and accepted as a unique being with their own distinctive qualities and aptitudes;
- The School records ethnicity of pupils only with the consent of parents for the purposes of data collection by the DfE;
- Incidents of racism, religion, gender or other discrimination including related bullying is recorded and reported in line with DfE and other statutory requirements;
- This policy will underpin all the other policies of this school;
- This policy will ensure that the provisions of the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and subsequent code of practice will be noted and put into place where it does not conflict with our Steiner Waldorf pedagogy. It will ensure that the Revised Code of Practice for SEN 2002 is implemented where possible within the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum.

We will meet our statutory obligations under relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010, which prohibits discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment. This policy conforms to the Equality Act 2010 and is monitored to ensure compliance with the requirements of the relevant legislation in force from time to time. The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff treat pupils, parents, carers, visitors, suppliers, both past and present.

We reject racism, in all its forms, including any statements in Steiner's body of work that may be perceived as racist, or to support racism. The School is mindful that Steiner's racist statements were anachronistic and are antithetical to basic human values and dignity and we do not adhere to them.

Aims for Staff

This policy applies to the School's employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency staff and consultants and volunteers who are not employees but who work at the School (collectively referred to as "Staff" in this policy).

Every member of staff is required to support this policy to ensure that discrimination does not occur in the workplace or wider School community. All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status. Your attention is drawn to our separate Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy.

This policy does not form part of any employee's terms and conditions of employment and is not intended to have contractual effect. It is provided for guidance to all members of staff at the School who are required to familiarise themselves, and comply with its contents. The School reserves the right to amend this policy at any time.

This policy applies to all aspects of the School's relationship with Staff and to relations between Staff members at all levels. This includes:

- job advertisements;
- recruitment and selection;
- training and development;
- opportunities for promotion;
- conditions of service;
- pay and benefits;
- conduct at work;
- capability, disciplinary and grievance procedures; and
- termination of employment.

The School does not discriminate against staff on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment,

race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age (the protected characteristics). The School will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities.

All Staff must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to this policy and promote the School's aims and objectives with regards to Inclusion, Equality and Diversity. Staff will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice.

Any questions about the content or application of this policy should be referred to the HR/Admin Manager in the first instance.

Forms of Discrimination

Discrimination by or against a member of Staff is prohibited. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their gender or race because they would not "fit in" would be direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in the School's Anti-Harassment and Bullying policy.

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

Recruitment and Selection

The School aims to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics above. The School's recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and are not disproportionate.

Job advertisements will avoid using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. A copy of this policy shall be sent on request to those who enquire about vacancies.

The School will take steps to ensure that its vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in the School.

Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which the School may use, for example:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments);
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment;
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons;
- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

Applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy. Applicants will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or

belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment without first considering whether such matters are relevant and may lawfully be taken into account.

The School is required by law to ensure that all members of Staff are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective members of Staff, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. A list of acceptable documents is available from the HR/Admin Manager.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in the School, the School will monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary, subject to confidentiality and data protection, and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information will be removed from applications before shortlisting and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us to take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

The School is an organisation that uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess candidates' suitability for positions of trust working in an environment with children and young people. The School fully complies with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all candidates fairly.

The School will not discriminate unlawfully against any candidate who is required to provide information (a check) through this process. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent a candidate from working with the School. Whether or not it does will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

The School's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders will be made available to all candidates at the outset of the recruitment process. The School will ensure that it makes any candidate who is subject to a check aware of the DBS Code of Practice and will provide a copy of the Code on request.

As a check is part of the School's recruitment process, the School encourages all candidates called to interview to provide details of any criminal record (except cautions, convictions, reprimands or warnings which are "protected" (as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013) at an early stage of the application process. The School requests that this information is sent under separate, confidential, cover to a designated person within the School, who may vary depending on the nature of the post being recruited. The School guarantees that only those who need to see this information as part of the recruitment process will see it.

The School will ensure that it discusses with the candidate the relevance of any offence to the job in question. A candidate's failure to reveal information directly relevant to the job may result in an offer of employment being withdrawn.

Staff Training, Promotions and Conditions of Service

Staff training needs will be identified through informal and formal staff appraisals.

All Staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the School and all promotion decisions will be on the basis of merit.

Where appropriate the School will take steps to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

The School's conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are available to all Staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Termination of Employment

The School will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

The School will also ensure that absence, capability and disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination and are carried out fairly and uniformly for all Staff, whether they result in formal warnings, dismissal or other action.

Disability Discrimination

If a member of Staff is disabled, or becomes disabled, in the course of their employment with the School, they are encouraged to tell us about their condition. This is to enable the School to support the member of Staff appropriately.

If a member of Staff experiences difficulties at work because of their disability, they may wish to contact their Manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments to their working conditions or duties which they consider to be reasonable and necessary or which would assist in the performance of their duties.

The Manager may wish to consult with other relevant members of Staff and medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where reasonable, practicable and proportionate in all the circumstances of the case.

Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it would not be reasonable for the School to accommodate a particular adjustment and in such circumstances, it will ensure that it provides the member of Staff with its reasons and will try to find an alternative solution where possible.

The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether they place disabled Staff, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other Staff. Where reasonably practicable and proportionate the School will

take steps to improve access for disabled Staff and service users. Please see the Whole School Accessibility Plan on the School Website.

Fixed-Term Employees and Agency/Temporary Workers

The School will monitor its use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service to ensure they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. The School will also, where relevant, monitor their progress to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

Part-Time Workers

The School will monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities.

Complaints of Discrimination, Victimisation and Harassment on the Protected Characteristics

The School will treat all complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation related or connected to any of the protected characteristics made by its Staff, pupils or third parties seriously and will take action where appropriate.

Any member of Staff who considers that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, victimised or harassed within the meaning of this policy should discuss the matter in the first instance with their Manager or, if they do not consider this to be appropriate, with either the HR/Admin Manager or the Head Teacher. In some cases, it may be possible to resolve the matter informally and reach a satisfactory resolution.

If a member of Staff wishes to make a formal complaint, they should raise the matter through the School's Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and will be investigated in accordance with the School's Speak Up (whistleblowing) policy and

procedure and the member of Staff will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation and provide an explanation for their actions.

Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. If the School concludes that the allegations are false or have been made maliciously or in bad faith, it will deal with the matter in accordance with its disciplinary procedure. Any member of Staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. The School takes a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

Equal Opportunities (Pupils)

The fundamental British Values of democracy, rule of law. Individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are at the heart of Steiner Education.

Staff will not accept behaviour, slogans or clothing which are likely to condone discrimination or hatred.

The School will not condone stereotyping in any form and will address such behaviour among pupils and staff seriously. At all times, we aim to fulfil the terms of the Equality Act 2010.

The School aims to provide an appropriate and supportive learning experience for all pupils, whatever their colour, origin, culture, gender, religion or ability. The School has high expectations for all pupils.

The School is committed to a policy of treating all pupils and their parents / carers and potential pupils and their parents / carers as equal individuals and therefore of respecting each person as a valuable human being, each with their own gifts and challenges.

The School aims to provide pupils with the opportunity to learn in an environment free of prejudice. Every opportunity within the School, the community of families and Staff and

the curriculum will be used to create and enhance respect, tolerance and support for all human beings in all their diversity and richness and in particular for each member of the School community. It is the responsibility of all Staff to ensure that their conduct with pupils and colleagues reflects this responsibility at all times.

Inclusion

Inclusion is the right to be included. We believe in the principle that inclusion is the right of all people. We ensure that every pupil within our School:

- Has equal chance to learn and develop;
- Has the opportunity to participate equally;
- Is given opportunity to communicate in their preferred format;
- Has their individual needs known and met;
- Feels safe and know they belong;
- Is valued and unique;
- Feels strong and confident about their identity.

The School does not discriminate against applicants for admission on grounds of race, religion, gender, socio-economic or cultural background.

- The ethos, curriculum and mode of teaching support getting to know each pupil in depth and allow the teachers to differentiate on a daily basis between pupils with different capacities and needs;
- The School's curriculum incorporates substantial elements which bring an awareness and appreciation of different cultures, e.g. in world religions, mythology, history, music, geography etc.;
- Learning Support Teachers will, within the school's resources, give support to individual pupils or to smaller groups;
- The School has a strong ethos of close and co-operative relationships with parents, which maximises the potential of individual support strategies;
- The School has an Accessibility Plan which outlines improvements and when these are expected to be achieved.

All Staff are responsible for the success of this policy. Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved. Comments, suggestions and queries should be addressed to the HR/Admin Manager in the first instance.

Staff are expected to:

- Recognise and record students' strengths and successes to encourage a positive self-image;
- Encourage everyone in the school community to ensure that there is no victimisation, discrimination, either direct or indirect, against disabled pupils, pupils with a Special Educational Need; or on racial, gender or other grounds;
- Ensure that all pupils receive their entitlement to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum and that provision for those pupils on our roll with special needs is central to curriculum planning (this includes gifted/talented pupils);
- All teaching staff and decision makers must be familiar with the school's SEND policy, the requirements of the Statutory Codes of Practice for SEN (Revised), Disability and Race and they must ensure that the codes underpin all aspects of their work;
- Make reasonable adjustments to alleviate any disadvantages faced by pupils with a disability or any particular learning need.

The commitment to educational inclusion is an integral part of every aspect of the School's life and work. It will be marked by the child centred approach to all we do, to ensure that the needs of each individual are met.

Other Relevant Policies:

Accessibility Plan;

DBS Policy;

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure;

Grievance Policy and Procedure;

SEND Policy;

Speak Up (Whistleblowing) Policy.