

Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for the St Aubyn Centre Therapeutic Education Department brings together all previous policies around equality including those for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act of 2015 places a duty on education providers, alongside other agencies, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). Education, like other key sectors, has a responsibility to promote values of openness, tolerance and facilitating free debate which is central to being a British citizen.

This Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, and partner agencies.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity, and
- foster good relations between groups.

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

The St Aubyn Centre Therapeutic Education Department is a Tier 4 Child and Mental Health in-patient service for young people aged 13-18 years. Admission is in response to medical need. The young people come from the full range of academic ability and social-economic groups.

Some of the young people are designated disabled by virtue of the duration of their ill-health/hospitalisation and the impact of this on their ability to access education.

The Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term (longer than one year) adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

Overall aims of the Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within The St Aubyn Centre Therapeutic Education Department 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.

Our approach

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

We seek opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared humanity. Identify commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpin our approach to equality.
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better.
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community.
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world.
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities.
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society.

Our mission statement

The St Aubyn Centre TED believes that all young people should be provided with appropriate education in a safe, stable, containing learning environment. Our students are aged 13 to 18 and academically they range from mild learning difficulties to gifted and talented. They are given opportunities to succeed through the use of highly personalised individual education plans which are linked to the Care Pathway for their mental health problem. We see engagement with education in the widest sense as fundamental to recovery. The Therapeutic Education Department works closely with the nurses, doctors and therapists at the centre and with a wide range of professionals in the community.

Our vision statement about Equality

The St Aubyn Centre Therapeutic Education Department 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 duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all. 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.

We will consider whether to provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to young people's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, particularly where there is no Education Health and Care Plan to provide the auxiliary aid or service.

We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following:

- Therapeutic Education Department (TED) policies
- Interaction with peers
- Opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- Exam arrangements
- Behaviour management approach and sanctions
- School activities and trips
- TED's arrangements for working with other agencies
- Preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- Learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- Classroom organisation
- Grouping of pupils
- Access to TED facilities
- Activities to enrich the curriculum
- TED sports
- Employees' and staff welfare

The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Our Head of Education will

- Oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- Ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- Develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- Monitor the policy and report to the Management Committee annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information
- Ensure 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 School Development Plan (SDP)
- Support the Head of Education in implementing any action necessary
- Engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy
- Evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years

Our Senior Leadership Team 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 Education, provide advice/support in dealing with incidents/issues
- Assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SDP

Our students will:

- Be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- Be encouraged to actively support the Policy

Our parents/carers will:

- Have access to the Policy through the school website
- Be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- Be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

Members of the Therapeutic Education Department will:

- Be involved in the development of the policy
- Be fully aware of the Policy and how it relates to them
- Understand that this is a whole school issue and how it relates to them
- Make known any queries or training requirements.

Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies will be encouraged to support the Policy

How we developed our Policy – Participation and Involvement

We access students' views through the PSHCE curriculum, **community meetings**, their ITEP target setting, their CPA feedback, leaving statements, and discharge questionnaires.

Members of TED are invited to contribute in our weekly team meetings and in their personal supervision time.

We use the self-evaluation framework to monitor the makeup and needs of students and staff – and how well we are meeting those needs.

Our Management Committee are invited to contribute in their regular meetings.

Employment

We comply fully with legislation which protects employees from discrimination based on 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 and disciplinary procedures. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of the team and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that they 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 the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. Development can be through their PMR.

Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents

Hate incidents and prejudice based bullying are recorded and dealt with effectively.

Implementation, monitoring and reviewing

This policy was agreed by the team on 15 June 2023 and by the Management Committee on 21 June 2023

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of the whole team and of the Management Committee who have agreed this policy.

We will report annually on the Policy and review after 4 years.