Equalities Report 2018

Equalities Objectives

In accordance with its statutory public sector equalities duties Thomas Hickman School has adopted the following equalities objectives for the period 2017 to 2020 – to:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community

Promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with [different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins].

How we do this

All learners at Thomas Hickman school are BIRDS – we all strive to demonstrate these values in and out of school, at all times in all that we do. We also promote NO OUTSIDERS HERE, the premise of which is that at Thomas Hickman School we endeavour to improve the lives of all our children, young people and families. We celebrate our rich diversity and take steps to tackle all kinds of bullying. In doing so, we believe that children will attain more at school and our community will be happier and more successful.

We celebrate all our children and their families without discrimination.

We are a caring community where our whole-school BIRDS charter is built on mutual trust and respect for all, [regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age or gender]. The ‘No Outsiders Here’ message fulfils our duty to promote diversity and prepares our children for life in modern Britain.

‘No Outsiders Here’ is British Law and supports the Equality Act to ensure that everybody is treated equally and without prejudice.

At Thomas Hickman we are determined that all our students will achieve the best that they can academically. However, that equality is about much more than academic achievement is key to our
approach. We are committed to ensuring that all students have as full access as is reasonably practical to all the opportunities that the school provides and that all students, [regardless of background, gender, culture, faith, ability, economic status or ethnic origin] will be treated with equal respect by fellow pupils, teachers and other employees.

Our school has specific policies on each of Admissions, Behaviour, Bullying, Equalities and Special Educational Needs. We ensure that all policies, where appropriate, but especially these policies, promote all forms of equality. Policies are regularly reviewed and agreed by the school’s Governors. They form a key part of the basis of the day to day running of our school. We also keep data on pupil performance under regular review so that we can identify any groups of children that appear to be underperforming, analyse the reasons why and take steps to remove any barriers to learning.

In addition to doing whatever is reasonably practical to meet the specific needs of children who are disabled, have Special Educational Needs, have medical conditions or qualify as Pupil Premium we endeavour to ensure that they do not miss out on out of class activities, such as school trips Field of Study Wow days or opportunities to attend a THS club.

**Pupil Premium**

We take specific measures to improve the performance of Pupil Premium children. These are covered by a separate report on our use of Pupil Premium money.

**Disability**

Thomas Hickman School has a commitment to support children with disabilities.

We will make all reasonably practical adaptations to our school on a needs basis to enable all children to participate equally. For example, a child who attends school in a specially adapted pram has ramps to access all school areas. We also provide specially adapted furniture, i.e. a special desk/chairs/equipment which allows students to work together, as one.

We recognise that disability can also have a negative effect on siblings. For example, they may feel left out at home because the
child with the disability gets more parental attention. We look out for such siblings and they too can get one to one support from our Acorn (Pastoral) team.

**English as an addition language**

English as an Additional Language has always been important at Thomas Hickman, approximately a third of the school have an additional language: our EAL pupils historically achieve well in national assessments and continue to learn well at THS. We have a member of staff who regularly translates for parents who require support in reading newsletters and accessing school meetings.

**Special Educational Needs**

This term covers a multitude of conditions with different symptoms and effects on learning. Even within a single definition, the consequences will be on a spectrum from mild to severe. Thus, each child with a SEN needs to be supported in a different way as best fits their circumstances.

A key element of our behaviour policy is analysing the cause of behaviour issues. There are many differing reasons why children do not meet the school’s behaviour standards and discovering those reasons may be the first clue leading to the diagnosis of a special educational need. It is certainly an essential precursor to tackling those behaviour issues successfully. We have an ‘Aviary’ in place, to support children at playtimes who find these undirected opportunities challenging.

As with children who are disabled, we make any reasonably practical adjustments that will help tackle the issues faced by any particular child.

We regularly negotiate outreach arrangements with the local PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) - this has included most recently a 20 strong cohort of teachers and support staff being trained in Team Teach.

One situation that can be particularly difficult for children with SEN is transition – moving from one setting to another. The biggest hurdle is from Primary to Secondary but pre-school to Reception,
Reception to main school and even moving to a new year group can be a problem.

We produce personalised transition plans for students moving to secondary school. Whilst every school will have its own policies for supporting SEN pupils, this approach ensures that all the relevant information that we have about how that individual best accesses the curriculum and what makes them feel happy and safe in school is passed to their new location. We will arrange a pre-visit for children joining us and will seek (usually successfully) to arrange such a visit for a student leaving us. This means that, when they start at their new school, it is not totally strange to them. This limited familiarisation can be a great benefit. Something that formal is not appropriate when moving within the school but we apply the same principles to internal moves. If it will make life easier for the child and it is reasonably practical, we will do it.

Within school we will try to ensure that there is a member of staff with whom the child can develop a relationship and feel confident talking to or confiding in. Often that will be the class teacher or learning support assistant but it can be any appropriate staff member.

To support ‘in-year’ and ‘key stage’ transition we have changed our the leadership structure to accommodate phases rather than Key Stages i.e. (First Phase lead: EYFS and Yr1) (Middle Phase Lead: Yrs 2-4) (Upper Phase lead Yrs 5-7).

**Children with Specific Medical Needs**

There are many children in our school that are not registered as disabled but who have conditions that may affect their access to education or even their safety – such as Asthma or an allergy. Similarly, although Diabetes qualifies as a disability, many sufferers do not consider it as such.

It is not possible, in a school our size, for every member of staff to know the circumstances of every child who has a medical condition. However, we ensure that staff who are in regular contact with the child concerned (typically the form teacher and Teaching Assistants) have detailed knowledge of the condition, have accessed any relevant professional training and know what to do if an incident
occurs. With life threatening conditions, such as nut allergies, we ensure that there is a much wider knowledge of the children suffering from that issue so that urgent action can be taken to ensure safety. We have recently created a new policy Allergens at School.

Core to this and to improving children’s ability to gain full benefit from the opportunities Thomas Hickman offers is the school Medical Officer, who is part of the Acorn Team. This post is in place because we recognise that teaching staff are not and cannot be medically trained and that, as a relatively large school, it is not practical to provide specialist training on all the individual conditions that we see.

Our Medical officer is a source of advice and support to staff and parents who have responsibility for affected children on a day to day basis. She is trained to make judgements as to whether a situation can be managed in school or requires action by a medical professional outside school. She also provides direct support to children as someone to whom they can talk in confidence if they need support or advice from someone who understands their situation.

Racism, Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education (SMSC) and related wider issues

Core aspects of our SMSC programme, including the NO Outsiders Here initiative, include teaching the understanding of, and respect for, British Values together with respect and tolerance for all religions and moral codes. We have a zero tolerance policy towards religious prejudice or disrespect of religious beliefs.

We have a similar approach towards Race and Nationality, and Homophobia. We seek to inform our pupils about British culture but also that of other nations. Racism and racist incidents are wholly unacceptable, as are any discriminatory remarks. As part of this approach we are involved with “Show Racism the Red Card”

We do recognise that young children can say things that others consider offensive without intending offence. So, although consistency is important, our response to discriminatory incidents will be influenced by context and intent. Nevertheless, any such
incidents are unacceptable. We use a standard form via Behaviour Watch to monitor this which helps ensure consistency and that we have a comprehensive record for such matters. The school will take the action necessary to prevent repetition. There has been 1 incident this year which involved name calling.

Children who are being bullied or are in fear of bullying cannot be happy members of our school community nor can they learn effectively. So, while we recognise that disputes between pupils and fallings out between friends are an inevitable part of life, we do not tolerate bullying in any shape or form. Action taken will always depend on circumstances but bullying, whether physical, verbal or psychological will be tackled firmly and fairly and the students involved will be left in no doubt as to the school’s position on this matter. We have invited the NSPCC into school to run assemblies all children in the school.

Finally, we sensitively provide information and opportunities for support and discussion children at the top end of the school about growing up and the changes that will affect them. This is designed to help them feel comfortable about changes that may occur whilst still at Thomas Hickman and to ensure that they are able to give their best without worrying about such matters