



Houghton School

**Equality Policy
(including Accessibility)**

Revised October 2025

Governing Body approval	
Date	October 2025
Review	October 2026

Introduction

This policy document sets out Houghton School's commitment to ensuring equality, opportunity and diversity for all children, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and age for staff.

It is our belief that the fundamental principles of equality are inseparable. We will adhere to the legal definitions of these protected characteristics as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission code of practice which can be found in annex A.

We aim develop a culture of inclusion and diversity, in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life. We intend to do this by creating a fair and just school community that promotes social inclusion, community cohesion and equality, respects diversity and challenges and acts upon discrimination and inequality. Such an ambition requires a consistent, coherent and systematic approach which all members of the school recognise and commit to.

We embrace The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023, which unified all existing equality legislation. This policy therefore replaces the previous separate policies for:

- Racial Equality Scheme
- Gender Equality Scheme
- Disability Equality Scheme
- Accessibility Policy

The School Context

Haughton School serves the whole of the Borough of Telford and Wrekin and also has a small number of children from Shropshire and Staffordshire. It provides for children from reception age to year 6. All children in school have an Education Health Care Plan. The children have moderate/Severe learning difficulties and complex needs including autism, communication/speech and language difficulties, sensory impairments and/or physical disabilities. Children achieve significantly below age-related expectations.

Children come from a wide socio-economic spectrum, many from areas of deprivation. Currently there are 44.84% eligible to claim free school meals.

In 2010, 2014, 2017 and 2023 Ofsted judged the school to be good.

General Duty

The general duty states all public authorities are legally required, when exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and harassment that is unlawful under The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023.

We recognise that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN Convention of Rights of People with Disabilities and the Human Rights Act 1998

Equality and the law

Haughton School will ensure that it does not unlawfully discriminate against the children, prospective children, staff, job applicant or parents / carers in the performance of its duties, policies and practices.

Discrimination means treating someone less (or more) favourably than a 'comparator'. Harassment (which is one form of discrimination) means violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Victimisation means discrimination because of a previous complaint. We recognise that discrimination can occur in the following ways and we will actively work to alleviate it:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from disability including failure to make reasonable adjustments and provide auxiliary aids and services
- Harassment
- Victimisation

Disability Equality*

We will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for all members of the school community regardless of their disability.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate harassment of someone with a disability that is related to their disability
- Promote positive attitudes towards those with a disability
- Encourage participation in public life.
- Make reasonable adjustments to enable all children to access the curriculum and daily life of the school.

The purpose of the school is to educate children with disabilities. It is characterised by high expectations for all children regardless of learning difficulty or any additional disability.

The co-location with a mainstream school maximises opportunities for inclusion for children. Staff are trained to deliver high quality teaching/care to all children. Job descriptions are detailed and robust because of the challenges of the work.

Racial Equality*

We will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity for all races
- Promote good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Gender Equality*

We will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment

- Promote equality of opportunity between males and females.

Religion or belief*

We will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for religious beliefs and other beliefs held by individuals
- Support the understanding of a range of religious and other beliefs.

Sexual Orientation*

We will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity regardless of sexual orientation

Transsexual Equality / Gender Reassignment*

Due to the age and level of need of the children at Houghton School this is unlikely to arise. However, this may be an issue relating to staff, in which case we will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for those who propose to, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment. It also includes those who are not undergoing a medical procedure

Pregnancy and maternity*

Due to the age of the children at Houghton School this is unlikely to arise. However, this may be an issue relating to staff, in which case we will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for those who are pregnant or on maternity leave.

Age*

We will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity regardless of age

Marriage and Civil Partnership* - This may be an issue relating to staff so we will actively seek to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for those who are married or in a civil partnership

*refer to appendix A for clarification of definitions

Our Approach to Promoting Equality

The overall objective of the school's Equality Policy is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations and positive attitudes for all.

Through the Equality Policy, the school seeks to ensure that no member of the school community receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified.

The specific duty for the school is to:

- Publish information to show how we are complying with the public Sector Equality Duty and objectives – which will be done through publishing this Equality Policy and through developing our equality objectives which will be reviewed annually

The principles of this policy apply to all members of the school community – children, staff, governors and parents/carers.

In order to comply with the requirements of the public sector equality duty (PSED) we will:

Collect and publish school equality information annually (by 31st December)

As Houghton School is a local authority-maintained school, Telford & Wrekin Council undertake routine equality monitoring of our staff and children by race, gender, age and disability.

We will encourage parents/carers to disclose whether they or their child have a disability by undertaking the following activity:

- Asking applicants as part of enrolment
- Publicising the provision that is made for disabled people
- Asking whether any specific arrangements are required
- Creating a safe culture for disclosure

We will collect the following workforce information:

- The number of part-time/full-time staff and the race, gender, disability and age distribution An indication of likely representation on sexual orientation and religion and belief, ensuring anonymity
- An indication of any issues for transsexual staff
- Gender pay gap information
- Grievances

We will also publish our equality objectives. We will publish school equality information annually as part of our school information and Head Teacher's report to Governors.

Undertake engagement activity with protected groups annually

Houghton School will undertake engagement activity annually with protected groups.

Identify and publish school equality and accessibility objectives

Houghton School will develop specific and measurable equality and accessibility objectives based on the information and evidence gathered. Objectives will meet all three aims of the general duty. The equality and accessibility objectives will be reviewed at the end of each Summer term. The equality objectives can be found in the 'Equality Information and Objectives document' and accessibility objectives can be found in an appendix to this policy.

We will undertake equality analysis on the effects of school practices and policies as part of the school policy review process.

Equality - aims and values

At Houghton School our vision is to include all children, whatever their abilities and needs, in our aim to:

- Ensure equality of access for all children.
- Help each child develop his/her academic, social and practical abilities to his/her highest standard.
- Help each child achieve self-confidence, initiative and independence
- Develop the children's abilities to enable them where possible, to return to their local school and thus immediate surroundings or, if this is not possible, prepare them to become members of a wider society on leaving school.
- Create a school community of caring, sharing and learning with relationships between children, parents, governors and school staff based on mutual trust and respect.
- To create a happy and secure learning environment where all children's needs are met, where achievements and success are recognised and praised
- To ensure the EYFS requirements are delivered to all children from rising 4 to 5 years.
- To ensure that an appropriately differentiated National Curriculum is delivered to all children aged 5-11.
- To promote all children's spiritual, physical and emotional well-being so that they are secure, confident and well-motivated.
- To develop all children's personal responsibility and encourage decision-making and choices, communicating through whatever means appropriate.
- To provide a wide range of developmental and age-appropriate learning experiences which are both exciting and challenging.
- To offer opportunities of working co-operatively alongside others, developing friendships and respect for others.
- To provide all children with experiences of their own and other religious and cultural backgrounds and values.

In all our work, we seek to maintain and develop the conditions most likely to achieve these aims through:

- A curriculum which reflects the diverse nature of our children and the wider community.
- An inclusive communication environment which features the use of signing, symbols and objects of reference.
- Provision of therapies.
- Implementation of strategies to manage sensory impairments.
- Analysis of data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individual and groups of children
- Analysis of achievement data by ethnicity, gender and area of need, and action any gaps, including targeted support where appropriate.
- Provision of appropriate information technology.
- Provision of appropriate equipment for children with physical disabilities
- Consistent and sensitive approaches to positive behaviour management
- Promoting attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice.

- A commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration and partnership with parents and fellow professionals.

We would like all parents / carers to:

- Feel welcomed in school.
- Work in partnership with staff.
- Be consulted and have their views acted upon where practicable.
- Be well informed.

We like all Governors to:

- Know the school and its work well.
- Offer constructive advice and challenge.
- Promote the school in the wider community.

We want the wider community to:

- Develop understanding of our children and respect their abilities.

All work in the school is focused on meeting the needs of all, taking account of all the protected characteristics.

We strive to include and engage all children and to prepare them for inclusion in a diverse society. This school will always take steps to:

- Promote equality of opportunity and access for all
- Oppose all forms of prejudice and negative discrimination
- Ensure that whatever the level of disability all children will have access to the curriculum.

Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are operated by the Local Authority and are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on the protected characteristics or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any disproportionality is identified and dealt with.

Accessibility

Accessibility is considered under physical, curriculum and information.

The definition of disability

'A person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

At Houghton School all our children come under this definition and as such all of our curriculum, staffing and buildings are focused on improving access.

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on the everyday lives of children.

As a specialist setting the school is fully accessible for all children with SEND. The curriculum has been planned to be broad and balanced and personalised for all children in our provision. The personalisation ensures the curriculum is fully accessible for each child.

The self-review process is rigorous to ensure that all the needs of all children are fully met.

Central to all our work is equality of opportunity and accessibility which permeates every aspect of school life. Our school improvement plan has accessibility and equality aims embedded within it as they are integral to our work.

Information in school is presented in a variety of formats according to children's needs. We continue to improve the delivery of all our information to ensure it is accessible to children, staff, parents and visitors.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Haughton School. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities, principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

As employers we have obligations under protected characteristics of age, marriage and civil partnerships.

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy, maternity and faith or religion are considered when approaching staff and/or when appointing staff and re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff.
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff, which are monitored as part of the performance management process
- Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Consultation and involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, children and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape a plan:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire and parents' evening consultation meetings.
- Feedback from staff surveys or through staff meetings/training days.
- Feedback from children's questionnaires.
- Feedback from the school council.
- Issues raised in annual reviews of Education Health Care Plans
- Feedback at Governing body meetings.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of governors

The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive for the whole school community, and responsive to their needs based on all areas under the protected characteristics.

All who work in the school have a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion and avoiding unfair discrimination.

Governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring the school complies with all current equality legislation.
- Ensuring that this policy and its procedures are followed.
- Ensuring the equalities and accessibility objectives are monitored and reviewed annually

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying them out.
- Making sure that procedures are followed.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with racist, sexist and homophobic incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping.
- Promoting equality and good community relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for any reasons related to the protected characteristics

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices:

Leadership Team

- Co-ordinating and monitoring work on equality issues.
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment.
- Monitoring achievement of all groups.

Monitoring, reviewing and assessing impact:

This policy has been agreed by our Governing body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing school policies and their impact in regard to the promotion of promoting equality and the school actions to achieve it.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to track each child's progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure all groups of children are making the best possible progress and take appropriate action to address any gaps. Requirement to publish data on an annual basis will be fulfilled through the school improvement process and reports to Governors.

Specific Duty - Publishing Information

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish the policy, we will:

- Publish the Equality policy on the School Website
- Raise awareness/provide training at staff meetings
- Make sure hard copies are available on request.

Breaches of the Policy

Any breaches of the policy will be dealt with in the same way as other breaches of policy as determined by the Head Teacher and Governors

If a member of the public feels they have been treated unfairly by school under the protected characteristics or suffered harassment, then they will have equal access to the Complaints Procedure.

Any complaints by staff about unfair treatment in relation to the protected characteristics will be dealt with through the Local Authority Grievances/Dignity at Work Policies as appropriate.

We will report termly to Governors on complaints as a standard agenda item.

Appendix A

Definitions of the Protected Characteristics in relation to Equality

What do we mean by Disability Equality?

We recognise that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

What do we mean by Gender Equality?

We recognise that a person's gender refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to boys or girls.

What do we mean by gender reassignment equality?

We recognise that a person may express their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical gender that they were born with.

What do we mean by pregnancy and maternity equality?

Treating a woman less favourably because she is or has been pregnant, has given birth in the last 26 weeks or is breastfeeding a baby who is 26 weeks or younger.

What do we mean by Race Equality?

The school adopts the definition of Race as outlined in the Equality Act 2010 as one of the protected characteristics which refer to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

What do we mean by Religion or Belief Equality?

A Religion or belief refers to a religious and/or philosophical belief including lack of belief (e.g. atheism). A religion must be identifiable and have a clear structure or belief system. A belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their lives or perceives the world (e.g. Humanism)

What do we mean by Sexual Orientation Equality?

The school uses the definition as outlined in legislation as sexual orientation meaning a person's sexual orientation towards:

- persons of the same sex
- persons of the opposite sex, or
- persons of either sex

The school extends the definition of this protected characteristic of sexual orientation to include:

- references to a person who is of a particular sexual orientation, or
- references to persons who share the same sexual orientation

Appendix B

Accessibility Plan

Scope of the Plan

This plan covers all three main strands of the planning duty:

- **Improving the physical environment of school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services.**
- **Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in schools' curriculum.**
- **Improving the delivery of information to pupils with disabilities**

Monitoring

At Houghton School we recognise that monitoring is essential to ensure that our children are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

We will monitor:

- Attainment
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Selection & recruitment of staff
- Governing body representation

Accessibility Plan

Planned Developments Academic Year 2025 - 2026

Area to be developed	Change required	Planned impact of change	Time Scale	Approximate Costing
School Building / Grounds	To re-purpose a store cupboard (HA039) into a sensory/dark room (including fire door and ventilation)	To ensure that the school is designed to meet the needs of an increasingly complex cohort of children	End of academic year	Quotes are being obtained. Cost will be paid by LA
	To repurpose the grounds outside (HA016) into a clear and safe play area (removing soil borders and securing access to shed area)	To ensure that the school is designed to meet the needs of an increasingly complex cohort of children	Oct 25 (half term)	£4,233 + VAT Cost will be paid by LA
	To repurpose an unused hygiene room (HA031) into a child's individual work room (with ventilation)	To ensure that the school is designed to meet the needs of an increasingly complex cohort of children	Easter holidays 2025 (Completed)	£5,907.80
	Installation of handrail on slope to upper play area	To provide safe access for children with mobility difficulties to the MUGA	End of academic year	Quotes to be obtained
	To undertake a full assessment of the redesigned building by Sensory Inclusion Team	To ensure the sensory needs of children are met	End of academic year	
Equipment / Software /Curriculum	Explore quotes/ viability of ruggedized Chromebook/laptop devices	To ensure accessibility to the computing curriculum for all children	End of February 2026	Quotes to be obtained

	Purchase of additional touch screen computers	To ensure children with fine motor skill and coordination difficulties can access IT based learning opportunities	End of Spring Term	£10,000
	Purchase of software license for Nessy Reading and Spelling	To develop the reading and spelling ability of identified children	January 2026	£735 annually
	Purchase of Calm Brain Software license	Support for the EHWP of children	January 2026	£350 annually
	OT Assessment of physical aids needed to ensure access to learning opportunities	All children will be able to access the classroom learning opportunities to their full potential	Ongoing throughout the year	
	Review of PE curriculum to ensure equality of access for children with complex physical difficulties	Equality of access	End of academic year	
	Investigate opportunities to improve the learning of children with EAL	Children progressing and achieving in line with their peers	Ongoing	
Health & Safety	Fire door inspection review - to include repair (where possible) and replacement (where necessary)	School meets health & safety requirements and doors appropriately sealed in the event of a fire	End of academic year	T&W Bit Team leading on this.
	Moving & Handling Assessments	Ensure dignity is maintained for all children where moving & handling is essential, all staff	Ongoing throughout the year taking account of any	N/A – school based Moving & Handling Trainer.

		appropriately trained in order to undertake moving & handling	significant changes within the child.	Refresher training costs not applicable for this period.
Continuing Professional Development	Refresher Manual Handling training for all staff	All staff competent in undertaking manual handling routines	Spring Term 2026	
	Develop charter for children who are wheelchair users	Consistent approach to enabling independence for children who are wheelchair users	Summer Term 2025	
	Training for all staff to support their skill and understanding in providing a high-quality provision for children with increasing complex learning needs.	All staff appropriately trained / skilled and confident	End of academic year	Training costs to be obtained