



Maharishi School

Equality Information & Objectives Statement

2022-23

Date policy last reviewed: October 2022

Signed by: Lisa Edwards

Headteacher

Signed by:

Chair of the Governing Body

Opening statement

At Maharishi School, we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The school's general duties, with regard to equality, are:

- Eliminating discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Fostering good relationships across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise any staff member, pupil, prospective pupil, or other member of the school community because of their:

- Sex.
- Age.
- Race.
- Disability.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy or maternity.
- Marriage and civil partnership.

We aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through Consciousness-based Education (CbE) and our Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) and Religious Education (RE) curriculums, with special emphasis on promoting equality and diversity, and eradicating prejudicial incidents for pupils and staff. Our school is committed to not only eliminating discrimination, but also increasing understanding and appreciation for diversity.

Eradicating discrimination

We believe that a greater level of success from pupils and staff can be achieved by realising the uniqueness of individuals. Creating an inclusive environment where individuals feel confident and at ease is a commitment of the school. At Maharishi School, this environment will be achieved by:

- Being respectful.
- Always treating all members of the school community fairly.
- Encouraging an understanding of diversity and inclusion and the benefits it can have.
- Adopting an inclusive attitude and ensuring that the whole school community understands what inclusive behaviour looks like in the school and how this aligns with the school's ethos.
- Adopting an inclusive curriculum that is accessible to all.
- Encouraging compassion and open-mindedness.

- Challenging bias and calling it out in order to move the conversation forward.

At Maharishi School, we are committed to having a balanced, diverse and fair curriculum. We believe that our pupils should be exposed to ideas and concepts that may challenge their understanding, to help ensure that pupils learn to become more accepting and inclusive of others. Challenging and controversial concepts will be delivered in a way that prevents discrimination and promotes inclusive attitudes.

Dealing with prejudice and celebrating diversity

We do not tolerate any form of prejudice-related incident. Whether direct or indirect, we treat discrimination against all members of our school with the utmost severity. When an incident is reported, our school is devoted to ensuring appropriate action is taken and a resolution is put into place which is both fair and firm.

Our pupils are taught:

- To be understanding of others.
- To reach their full potential socially, emotionally and academically.
- To be inclusive; ensuring that every pupil is welcomed and supported.
- To be aware of what constitutes discriminatory behaviour.
- That harmony is found in diversity.

Staff members will not:

- Discriminate against any member of the school community.
- Treat other members of the school community unfairly.

Staff members will:

- Promote diversity and equality.
- Encourage and adopt an inclusive attitude.
- Lead by example.
- Seek training if they need to improve their knowledge in a particular area.

Throughout the year, the school provides a variety of opportunities to celebrate diversity, including:

- Planning activities for key diversity awareness days, ie. Neurodiversity Celebration Week, International Women's Day and Black History Month
- Inviting guest speakers to talk to pupils about diversity, ie. religious speakers, cultural workshops, neurodiverse speakers
- Incorporating lessons about diversity into the curriculum

Equality and dignity in the workplace

We do not discriminate against staff with regard to their:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marital or civil partner status.
- Pregnancy or maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

Equality of opportunity and non-discrimination extends to the treatment of all members of the school community. All staff members are obliged to act in accordance with the school's various policies relating to equality.

We will guarantee that no redundancy is the result of direct or indirect prejudice. All disciplinary procedures are non-prejudicial, whether they result in warnings, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action.

Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, Maharishi School aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people with a particular protected characteristic
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people with a particular protected characteristic
- Encouraging people with a particular protected characteristic to participate fully in all activities

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Use attainment data to show how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse attainment data to determine strengths, areas for improvement and actions in response

Fostering an Inclusive Environment

Maharishi School aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of the curriculum. This includes teaching in CbE, PSHE, RE

(Religious Education) and Relationships Education (RE) and Relationships & Sex Education (RSE), and also in other curriculum areas.

- Holding assemblies, events and discussions dealing with relevant issues, including the use of Picture News resources.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with any tensions that may arise between pupils within the school. We will also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures and/or approaches.

Equality objectives 2022-26

Maharishi School has identified three objectives as set out below. Progress against these objectives will be monitored by the senior leadership team and reported annually to the governing body.

1. Safety for all
2. Unlocking potential of vulnerable groups
3. Involvement and engagement

Objective 1 - Safety for all

- Pupil Voice • School environment • A culture of vigilance • Academic curriculum and Pastoral support

Why this objective?

At Maharishi School, we must ensure that we challenge and address prejudice-related bullying and the use of derogatory language. Pupils have the right to feel safe at Maharishi School and to trust that whatever their differences, this will not make them a target of bullying or threatening behaviour. In addition, we must educate our pupils so that they can recognise relationships (including sexual) based on mutual respect, consent and understanding.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

1. Strengthen **Pupil Voice** through existing channels such as our Family Support Worker (including 'Support My Wellbeing' boxes at both phases), Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) at the secondary phase, Drawing & Talking therapy (at the primary phase) and pupil surveys. We also need to relaunch, and then maintain, Student Councils at both phases for a wider perspective and we need to ensure that information collected is shared appropriately and where necessary, leads to action.
2. **School environment:** Increase our understanding of safe and unsafe areas within the school sites through relaunching our Student Councils and by introducing 'school environment' to our pupil surveys.

3. It is incumbent on all staff to make sure there is a **culture of vigilance**. Training and reminders via staff meetings and regular updates will be used to remind staff to be vigilant. Staff will continue to engage with students around school and during lunch and break times, with particular emphasis on vigilance when on break/lunch duty so that any issues that may arise can be challenged and/or dealt with swiftly.
4. **Academic curriculum and pastoral support:** Pupils are, and will continue to be, taught how to manage their own safety. For pupils for whom this presents difficulty they will continue to have access to support for impulse control and making safe choices. We will continue to work with external agencies to work with students vulnerable to harm. Through the curriculum we will also continue to promote the accessibility of staff and counter any incidents of 'snitching' culture to ensure that pupils continue to report incidents of harm or potential threats, whether inside or outside of school.

Objective 2 - Unlocking potential of vulnerable groups

● Pupil Premium statement ● MER process ● Identification of vulnerable students ● HQT Teaching and Learning and Intervention 4

Why this objective?

We must ensure that we are closing gaps in attainment and progress between different groups through impactful teaching and learning and targeted support. Our school motto, 'Knowledge is Structured in Consciousness', encapsulates our commitment to developing 'the knower' (pupil) as well as providing a stimulating curriculum ('the known') and effective pedagogical strategies ('the process of knowing')

We strive for all our pupils to be knowledgeable about themselves, to be creative and intelligent learners, to be confident in their ability to find success and fulfilment in life, to be respectful of their world and to be able to respond compassionately and effectively to the needs of others; to fulfil their potential whatever their background and/or protected characteristics.

To achieve this objective:

We must ensure that our staff are aware of our pupils' characteristics, and the difficulties and barriers many pupils face. We will provide training on the different barriers that disadvantaged pupils at Maharishi School experience and guidance on how these can be overcome. We will regularly monitor the progress pupils are making and react timely and appropriately when issues arise. This objective has been incorporated throughout our School Improvement Plan.

Objective 3 - Engagement with learning and community

- Enrichment and leadership opportunities
- All groups meet the school's attendance objective
- Behaviour data doesn't over-represent certain groups
- Cultural Capital

Why this objective?

At Maharishi School, it is important that we ensure all students engage with their learning and feel a sense of belonging to the school community. In order to achieve, personally and academically, pupils need to feel valued through leadership and enrichment opportunities and must also have excellent attendance and behaviour for learning.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

- Review Pupil Voice opportunities, identifying areas where pupils can contribute and 'have a voice' in school improvement (as above). Additionally, we intend to identify events that enable pupil leaders to contribute more effectively to the life of the school and to promote the school in the local community.
- As outlined in the Attendance Policy 'Missing out on lessons leaves students vulnerable to falling behind and less likely to achieve their full potential.' Analysis of data indicates that certain disadvantaged groups are more likely to have lower rates of attendance. We will continue to develop rigorous procedures to follow up on absences and work with parents and carers to support persistent absentees (e.g. because of EBSA) back into school.
- The school's Enabling Good Behaviour Policy emphasises that 'Ideal behaviour ... consists of actions which support ... the health, evolution and happiness of every individual in the school community [so that] the school as a whole is developed, nourished and sustained'. We plan to continue to build our ethos of 'enabling good behaviour' whilst having clear processes in place to identify pupils who are struggling to self regulate. We will continue to implement the best ways to support any pupils who are struggling through the Three Pillars of Ideal Behaviour, as outlined in the Enabling Good Behaviour Policy.
- The 'Matthew Effect' is well known in education (cumulative advantage: the rich get richer and the poor get poorer). It is key to the success and progression of our pupils that we close this gap through a rich, broad and inclusive academic and pastoral curriculum.

Closing statement

At Maharishi School, diversity is celebrated; we continuously promote an accepting and respectful environment for and within our school community. Through our system of Consciousness-based Education, pupils and teaching staff appreciate how CbE connects the individual and collective values of consciousness in the lives of our pupils, via group and class activities, reflecting on families and friends, appreciating their own part in the school community and extending outwards into society on the basis that "the World is my family".

