Heath House Prep School

Inclusion, Equality and Family Welfare Policy

Introduction

This policy applies to all children, staff, and parents of pupils or prospective pupils at Heath House, including the EYFS. This policy reflects our commitment to providing equality of opportunity and supporting the welfare of every child, regardless of their family structure or background.

This policy has regard for statutory duties under:

- The Equality Act (2010)
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015)
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for group and school-based providers (September 2026)
- The Education Act (1996)
- Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act (2013)
- DfE statutory guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (for introduction from 1 September 2026)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and current Independent School Standards guidance

This policy must be read in conjunction with the following school documents:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- School Accessibility Plan
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

In carrying out its responsibilities, the school complies with the applicable provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and recognises the protected characteristics relevant to pupils and prospective pupils, including disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The school is also committed to supporting pupils fairly regardless of special educational need, family structure, ethnic or national origin, or other individual circumstances.

Equality Act 2010

Heath House complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to ensuring that pupils and prospective pupils are not subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

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The school seeks to promote equality of opportunity, foster respectful relationships and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils where required.

Inclusion and Equality Provisions

General Principles

- **Access:** We ensure all children have equal access to learning and play opportunities.
- **Resources:** Our curriculum and resources reflect a wide range of communities, avoiding stereotypical or derogatory images.
- **Language:** We ensure children whose first language is not English are supported to have full access to the curriculum.
- **Dietary and Cultural Needs:** We work in partnership with parents to ensure medical, cultural, and dietary needs are met.

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required under the Equality Act 2010, so that they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. The school also identifies and supports pupils with special educational needs in accordance with its Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy and applicable SEND requirements. We proactively review our physical environment, curriculum delivery and information sharing to promote accessibility and inclusion.

Discriminatory Behaviour

Any form of discriminatory behaviour or remarks is unacceptable. Staff are trained to recognise, report, and deal with all incidents of discrimination immediately.

Family Diversity and Same-Sex Families

We embrace same-sex families into the school community by making them feel recognised, accepted and respected.

Relationships Education and Teaching about Protected Characteristics

In accordance with statutory RSHE guidance applicable from September 2026, teaching will be factual, age-appropriate and respectful. The school will teach relevant facts and law accurately, promote respect for people with protected characteristics and will not present contested views as established fact.

The school actively encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Teaching will be appropriate to pupils' ages and stages of development and will be integrated appropriately across Relationships Education, PSHE and the wider curriculum.

- **Factual Teaching:** We teach the factual and legal position that marriage in England and Wales can be between opposite-sex couples and same-sex couples.

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- **Protected Characteristics:** We teach about 'sexual orientation' and 'gender reassignment' as protected characteristics.
- **Biological Sex and Gender Reassignment:** Teaching about these matters will reflect the facts and the law concerning biological sex and the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Pupils will be taught that people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, like people with other protected characteristics, are protected from discrimination and should be treated with respect and dignity.
- **Contested Issues:** Where matters relating to sex and gender are contested, the school will not present a particular contested view as established fact. In accordance with statutory RSHE guidance, the school will not teach as fact that all people have a gender identity. Teaching will avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes and will remain factual, age-appropriate and respectful.
- **Support for Gender-Questioning Pupils:** Where a pupil expresses questions or distress relating to sex or gender, the school will respond sensitively, respectfully and on an individual basis, with the pupil's welfare and safeguarding needs at the centre of its response. The school will not make assumptions about the reasons for a pupil's feelings. Parents will normally be involved in decisions affecting their child, unless there is a safeguarding reason why this would not be appropriate. Any safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy and current statutory guidance.

Parental Engagement and Transparency

The school is committed to working openly with parents regarding Relationships Education and RSHE. Parents will be provided with information about the content and approach of the curriculum and, on request, will be given access to the teaching materials used, in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's PSHE, RHE and Citizenship Policy.

Separated Families

The school recognises that pupils may live within a wide range of family arrangements and that parental separation can affect a child's emotional wellbeing. The child's welfare and safety will remain paramount. The school will seek to remain impartial in disputes between separated parents and will act in accordance with applicable law, relevant court orders, statutory safeguarding duties and the school's Separated Family Policy.

Detailed arrangements concerning parental responsibility, information sharing, court orders, collection and contact arrangements, parental conduct and restrictions on access to the school premises are set out in the school's Separated Family Policy.

Role of School Staff

All school staff are required to:

- Implement the school’s Inclusion and Equality standards in every lesson.
- Maintain neutrality in parental disputes and family structures.
- Ensure teaching about sex, relationships and protected characteristics is factual, age-appropriate, respectful and consistent with the school's curriculum and current statutory guidance.

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- Proactively signpost parents to curriculum materials to facilitate open dialogue.
- Report any safeguarding or welfare concerns in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy, including reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy as appropriate. Other concerns regarding implementation of this policy should be raised with the Head Teacher or another appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Monitoring and Review

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually by the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team to ensure it remains in line with the latest DfE statutory guidance.

Internal use only

Last reviewed	September 2026
Date for review	September 2027

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