Equality and Diversity Policy

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Statement of intent

First Round understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a duty to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic.
- foster good relations between different groups.
- promote mental health and wellbeing.

First Round's values are underpinned by our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. We are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil is given the best chance at fulfilling their potential, and to promoting mental wellbeing amongst our pupils. We are committed to supporting and celebrating all pupils' individual identities. We have zero tolerance for any type of discrimination. We have developed this policy to provide a clear framework for how we will achieve our aims.

To do so we will adopt the following methods:

- embedding equality within teaching and resources.
- using key data indicators to understand the needs and characteristics of our provision.
- promoting community cohesion.
- promoting parental engagement.
- investing in regular staff training.
- using key data, such as measures of wellbeing, to monitor the progress of pupils with protected characteristics.
- regularly reviewing our policy to ensure it reflects current trends and issues.

1 Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

This policy has due regard to statutory and good practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act and schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children'
- DfE (2018) 'Gender separation in mixed schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2021) 'School admissions code'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following provision policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance and Absence Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policy
- GDPR Policy
- Admissions and Induction Policy

2 Roles and Responsibilities

The provision leads will:

- be responsible for ensuring First Round complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- ensure that the equality information and objective as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the provision, including to staff, pupils and parents.
- take all reasonable steps to ensure pupils and potential pupils will not be discriminated against, harassed or victimised in relation to:
  - admissions.
  - the way the provision provides an education for pupils.
  - how pupils are provided with access to benefits, facilities and services.
  - the exclusion of a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- ensure all policies are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments in place.
- implement and champion this policy, ensuring that all staff and pupils apply its guidelines fairly in all situations.
- conduct regular training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities under all relevant legislation, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge.
- review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.
- ensure that appropriate counselling is made available for pupils who require immediate interventions, parental assistance and personal counselling.
- monitor success in achieving equality aims and objectives.

staff will:

- be alert to the possible harassment of pupils, both inside and outside of the provision, and to deal with incidents of harassment and/or discrimination as the highest priority.
- carry out their statutory duties, relating to equal opportunities and inclusivity, pertaining to their specific roles.
- have due regard to the sensitivities of all pupils and not provide material that may cause offence.

- act as a role model for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole provision community.

3 Forms of Discrimination

Discrimination is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably, for example, refusing to admit a pupil because of their race.

Indirect discrimination occurs where a school/provision has a policy or practice in place that applies to all pupils but puts people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a rule that bans certain hairstyles, that would disproportionately affect pupils from a particular ethnic origin. Such a requirement would need to be objectively justified.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a pupil's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of a pupil who has complained or given information about discrimination, harassment or supported someone else's complaint.

4 Protected Characteristics

Staff will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of their:

- sex.
- race.
- disability, which includes mental health, encompassing prejudiced assumptions, attitudes or behaviours related to mental health.
- religion or belief.
- sexual orientation.
- gender reassignment.
- pregnancy or maternity.

Staff will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent, with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated. Staff will also not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic which they are believed to have, even if the belief is mistaken.

5 Sex

For the purpose of this policy, sex refers a pupil's biological assignment at birth depending on their reproductive organs. The provision understands that some pupils identify as a gender different to the sex they were assigned at birth, and we will support pupils through their transitioning phases.

Staff will ensure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.

The provision will only separate pupils by sex where there is reasonable justification for doing so, or if one of the following applies:

- pupils will suffer a disadvantage connected to their sex.
- one sex has needs that are different from the needs of the other sex.
- participation in an activity by pupils of one sex is disproportionately low.

The provision will consider non-statutory exceptions on a case-by-case basis, and regularly review the impact of any separation to ascertain whether it remains lawful.

Pupils will be offered equal opportunities to undertake any activity.

Pupils' age and stage of development will be taken into consideration before segregating sports teams. Both sexes will have equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities; where separation is deemed necessary, the single-sex sports teams will receive the same quality and amount of resources.

6 Race and Ethnicity

Staff will ensure that pupils of all races and ethnicities are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils and the provision will regularly review its practices to ensure that they are fair.

Staff will ensure pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are treated equally and fairly, while ensuring they are supported at all times. The provision will not separate pupils on the basis of their race or ethnicity.

The provision may, however, take positive action to alleviate any disadvantage experienced by those with protected characteristics, and to address the particular challenges affecting pupils of one racial or ethnic group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

7 Disability

Staff will ensure that pupils with disabilities are not singled out or treated less favourably than other pupils simply because they have a disability, which includes any mental health issue, regularly reviewing our provision practices to ensure they are fair.

First Round will avoid implementing rules that could have an adverse effect on pupils with disabilities (e.g. by making physical fitness a basis for admission,), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

Staff will ensure that they do not discriminate against pupils with disabilities because of something arising in consequence of their disability (for example, by not allowing a pupil on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for them to get in and out), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

The provision will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments for pupils who are disadvantaged due to their disability. The provision will provide auxiliary aids where necessary, to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with disabilities, especially where the pupil also has SEND but does not have a SEND statement or EHC plan.

The provision will meet its duty to undertake accessibility planning for pupils with disabilities as and if required and ensure that an Accessibility Plan is implemented – in accordance with the LA accessibility strategy – and reviewed where necessary.

The provision will adhere to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) section of it's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for pupils with SEND.

8 Religion and Belief

Staff will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their actual or perceived religion or belief, their lack of religion or belief, or their association with someone who holds a particular religion or belief. The provision will ensure that pupils are provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith, e.g. to perform their daily prayers.

Absences in relation to religious observances will be handled in accordance with the provision's Attendance and Absence Policy.

The provision will liaise with local religious leaders of all faiths to inform the amount of leave pupils will be granted in relation to religious observance.

9 Sexual Orientation

Staff will ensure that all gay, lesbian and bi-sexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents, are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.

Staff will support LGBTQ+ pupils to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

The provision will ensure that there is a designated safe space where pupils can discuss issues of sexual orientation without fear of discrimination.

10 Gender Re-assignment

The Equality Act 2010 defines gender re-assignment as applying to anyone who is undergoing, has undergone or is proposing to undergo a process (or part of a process) of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes.

Staff will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably in relation to gender reassignment, i.e. because they are trans or have trans parents, siblings or other family members. The provision recognises that gender re-assignment does not necessarily involve physical change, and can be solely social and emotional.

Pupils will be supported to dress in a way that reflects their gender identity, in line with the provision clothing requirements.

The provision will ensure that there are suitable toilet and changing facilities for pupils to use, including:

- gender-specific toilets and changing facilities.
- private changing facilities.

The facilities will be made available to all pupils and pupils can use the facility they feel most comfortable in, e.g. if a trans pupil wished to use a private changing room.

The provision will support trans pupils to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

The provision will ensure that there is a designated safe space within the provision where trans pupils can discuss issues of gender without fear of discrimination.

11 Pregnancy and Maternity

First Round will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably in the provision of education, benefits, facilities or services because they become pregnant, have recently given birth, have children or are breastfeeding.

The provision will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for the treatment and support of pupils who are pregnant or have just given birth.

12 Looked-after Children (LAC)

If the admission of LAC and previously LAC (PLAC) is undertaken this will take place in accordance with the requirements of our Admissions Policy.

Staff will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they are looked after, or have previously been looked after, by the state.

A personal education plan will be created and implemented for all LAC and PLAC, to ensure that their education and development needs are fully covered, including appropriate transition and catch-up support to ensure that they do not fall behind (included at this time should LAC/PLAC eventually be accommodated).

Staff will ensure that any SEND that LAC or PLAC have are duly taken into account and addressed, whether this is with or without a SEND statement or EHC plan.

13 The Curriculum

Pupils will be exposed to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, and the provision will not make any unjustified changes to curriculum content on the grounds of any protected characteristics that a pupil may have. The provision will ensure, however, that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way that prevents discrimination and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes. The provision will also take guidance from the home school with regards to this.

14 Promoting Inclusion

The provision will promote inclusion and equality through:

- ensuring that pupils are called by their preferred names, which may be different from their legal names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.
- ensuring that, as far as possible, all staff reflect the full diversity of our local community.

- providing an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- instilling in pupils an awareness of prejudice, giving them confidence that it can, and must, be eradicated.
- ensuring equal access to opportunities, such as extracurricular activities and the curriculum.
- taking care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
- valuing the cultural experiences and contributions of all pupils, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.
- communicating our policy to parents to gain their understanding, agreement and support for its provisions.
- promoting equality of opportunity within the wider society.
- ensuring admission arrangements will not unfairly disadvantage a pupil from a particular social or racial group, or with SEND.

15 Pupils that have Left.

First Round's responsibility to not discriminate, harass or victimise will not end when a pupil no longer attends the provision. It will continue to apply with regard to subsequent actions related to our previous relationship with the pupil, such as the provision of references.

16 Bullying and Discrimination

First Round's Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policy will be used to prevent, and effectively deal with, any discriminatory incidents.

Any bullying incidents of a Safeguarding or Child Protection nature will be reported, recorded and dealt with in line with the processes detailed in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The DSL or a provision lead will decide whether it is appropriate to notify Social Services and/or the Police of any incident.

Concerns with regards to the handling of bullying and discrimination incidents will be dealt with via the procedures outlined in the Complaints Policy.

17 Staff Training

New staff will receive relevant training on the provisions of this policy during their induction.

All staff training for will be delivered in-house on a termly basis.

Staff will receive the appropriate equalities training that will:

- ensure all staff are aware of, and comply with, current equalities legislation and government recommendations.
- ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can support pupils with protected characteristics.
- provide support to effectively manage any discrimination towards pupils with protected characteristics.
- provide up-to-date information on the terms, concepts and current understandings relating to each of the protected characteristics.
- develop appropriate strategies for communication between parents, educators and pupils about any issues related to a protected characteristic.
- ensure that the provision is aware of, and participates in, relevant awareness days, such as black history month, world disability day, transgender day of remembrance, pride, and international women's day.

18 Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the provision leads annually and updated where appropriate. Any amendments to it will be communicated to staff as well as being updated on the First Round website.

This policy will next be reviewed in **September 2027.**