Equality, Diversity & Equal Opportunities Policy

Ethos Statement

TAO Independent School actively promotes the involvement of pupils and their families, where appropriate, in the development of their education and the wider life of the School. Not only do we accept the principle of the young person's involvement, but it can be seen in practice through a variety of participation and consultation activities within and outside of the provision.

Principles

- We operate with a transparent approach where young people are consulted with openness on all aspects of their education programme. This will happen through key worker sessions, general discussion and consultations.
- We strive to ensure that all young people receive the best opportunities possible to achieve self-actualisation. Any discrimination against children, young people or adults will not be tolerated and will be challenged. Staff receive equality, diversity and inclusion information or training appropriate to their role, responsibilities and identified need.
- We ensure that all staff are treated as individuals by providing provision to ensure that everybody has fair access to equal opportunities.
- Young people are encouraged to develop an understanding of their individual roots and culture to develop their own identity. We also carry out individual work with young people to help them gain knowledge of discriminatory factors and to develop their sense of self.
- Diversity will be celebrated at TAO and young people will be actively encouraged to participate in activities that celebrate differences in people.

Our role is to assist young people to manage successfully significant changes and challenges; develop positive relationships and display positive behaviour. With teachers as role models, young people learn to behave towards each other and within the local community in a non-discriminative manner. Young people are encouraged to understand the diversity of cultures and beliefs that exist within the provision, local and wider communities.

We believe that all people, colleagues, pupils, families, and visitors should be treated with respect. Disruptive or offensive language or behaviour will not be tolerated and will always be challenged. When such incidents are perpetrated by young people, they will be dealt with in a way that promotes better understanding and encourages a change of attitude and

behaviour. If young people are subjected to discrimination they will be offered protection, comfort and support.

We believe that all young people are equally entitled to have their needs met and to be free from abuse and exploitation.

Children's Rights

Our principles of practice endorse the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We believe that all young people are equally entitled to have their needs met and to be free from abuse and exploitation. Pupils are supported by their key worker and wider staff team to understand their rights, express their views and participate meaningfully in decisions affecting their education and wellbeing.

Opportunities for pupil voice, consultation and discussion of rights are embedded within mentoring, curriculum and wider school practice**.**

Pupil Voice and Leadership

At TAO, we recognise young people as active partners in their education. Pupils are encouraged to participate in shaping the environment through feedback, pupil-led projects, and representation in regular service review discussions. We create platforms where their voices are not only heard but acted upon, promoting a sense of agency, leadership, and empowerment.

Overview

Our provision values the individuality of all our young people. We are committed to giving all our young people every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all young people. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our young people matter.

This policy extends to adults: staff, parents and carers.

This policy is in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this provision provides equal opportunity for all young people and adults, The School has 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, recognising that the application of particular protections varies according to context.

Aims & Objectives

- We aim to act positively and have due regard to the need to challenge and eliminate unlawful discrimination within both our provision and our community.

- We do not unlawfully discriminate against pupils, staff, applicants, parents, carers or others on the basis of a protected characteristic. We also seek to ensure that educational need, socioeconomic background or individual circumstance does not create avoidable barriers to participation or opportunity.
- We aim to promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our provision. We recognise that doing this may entail treating some young people differently.
- We seek to ensure that all young people have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the provision.

- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some young people.

- We aim to ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion, and training processes are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
- We aim to challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.

- We value each young person's worth, celebrating the individuality and cultural diversity of our society, and showing respect for all minority groups.

- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are often caused by poor self-image and are aware of the relationship between that and ignorance.

Equality Act Duties

TAO Independent School complies with the Equality Act 2010 as it applies to independent schools.

The School will:

• not unlawfully discriminate, harass or victimise pupils, staff, applicants or others;

• make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and staff where required;

• consider equality, accessibility and inclusion when developing policies, curriculum arrangements and school practices;

• challenge prejudice-based and discriminatory behaviour; and

• promote respect, inclusion and equality of opportunity through the curriculum and wider school culture

Racial Equality

With in our provision, we will:

- Strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion
- Promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups

- Seek to educate young people in a manner which promotes community cohesion in a multicultural society
- We endeavor to make our provision and its environment welcoming to all minority groups.

We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Racist, faith-targeted and other prejudice-based incidents will be challenged, recorded and responded to in accordance with the Anti-Bullying, Behaviour Management and Safeguarding & Child Protection policies, according to their nature and seriousness

TAO recognises that racism, faith-based prejudice and other discriminatory behaviour can cause significant harm in their own right and may constitute a safeguarding concern.

TAO promotes British Values, democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, through its curriculum, behaviour model, and outdoor learning ethos.

Disability, Accessibility & Reasonable Adjustments

TAO is committed to ensuring disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. The School anticipates and considers reasonable adjustments to teaching, resources, communication, activities and access arrangements according to individual need and the circumstances of the School.
Teaching and learning are adapted where appropriate, including through additional time, accessible resources, alternative methods, communication support, environmental adjustments or alternative activities where these are reasonable and support safe access to the curriculum.

Sex and Gender Equality

We are committed to seeing all individuals making the best progress possible in our provision.

The Role of the Teacher

- Staff are expected to reflect on potential bias and ensure that pupils are treated fairly, respectfully and in accordance with this policy and the Equality Act 2010.

- Teachers should seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues.

- All Staff must challenge prejudice-based and discriminatory language or behaviour and report significant or safeguarding-related concerns through the appropriate school procedure.

The Role of the Headteacher

- The Headteacher has operational responsibility for ensuring equality and inclusion are

considered in school practice, recruitment, employment, curriculum delivery and pupil provision.

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the provision's policy on Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities, and that staff apply these guidelines fairly in all situations
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum for young people, and in providing opportunities for professional development for staff.
- Promote respect for other people in all aspects of life.
- Ensure significant discriminatory incidents are addressed appropriately and that safeguarding concerns are referred to the DSL in accordance with the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- Ensure that staff are aware of the School's Equality, Diversity & Equal Opportunities Policy and apply its principles appropriately in practice.

The Headteacher and Proprietor will review the effectiveness of equality and inclusion arrangements as part of the School's wider quality-assurance cycle and following significant incidents, complaints or changes in law or guidance.

Evidence may include pupil voice, accessibility and reasonable-adjustment arrangements, curriculum review, complaints, behaviour and safeguarding information, and feedback from pupils, families and staff.

Curriculum Access

Reasonable adjustments are made across classroom, outdoor and therapeutic learning to ensure all pupils can access the full curriculum.

The commitment extends to curriculum design, teaching approaches, assessment methods, and access to learning environments, ensuring that all pupils can engage meaningfully with the TAO curriculum regardless of need.

Legal Framework & Review

This policy has been developed with reference to the following legislation and guidance:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended), including Parts 1, 2 and 5
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 (in relation to safeguarding, prejudice, and discriminatory bullying)
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

- Children and Families Act 2014, where relevant to SEND and accessibility

Version Updates

Version	Date	Author	Review / Changes	Approved By
2.0	09/09/26	Daniel Giblin	09/09/27	Headteacher / Proprietor