



Article 2:	Non-discrimination
Article 3:	Best interest of the child
Article 12:	Respect for the views of the child
Article 14:	Freedom of thought, belief and religion
Article 22:	Refugee children
Article 23:	Children with disability
Article 28:	Right to an education



## **KNOX ACADEMY**

### **DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY POLICY**

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#### **CONTENTS**

**Vision, values and inclusion statement**

**Purpose and Aims of this Policy**

**Definitions**

**Why are diversity and equality important?**

**Context**

- The Equality Act 2010
- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Respect for All: Anti –Bullying

**Commitments**

**Principles**

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Appendix 1:** Promoting Positive Behaviour: Anti-bullying at Knox Academy

**Appendix 2:** Resources for school, parents/carers and young people

**Appendix 3:** HGIOS 4 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion, Challenge questions

## **VISION, VALUES AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

### **Our Vision:**

*"Always to choose kindness and create a respectful environment where staff and pupils can inspire each other to achieve their goals and become life-long learners."*

### **Our Values:**

Ambition, respect and community.

### **Our Inclusion Statement:**

Knox Academy strives to be inclusive by welcoming all, celebrating difference and endeavouring to ensure all members of our community are supported to reach their full potential.

## **PURPOSE AND AIMS OF THIS POLICY**

This policy will form a framework for action. It will provide us with the tools to ensure that we live our values and achieve our vision, and is built upon the Knox Academy Inclusion Statement.

This statement was created following consultation with the school community and beyond over session 2018/2019.

The policy covers the two strands of diversity and equality promotion

- The relationship between our pupils and the institution of Knox Academy, including all staff
- The relationships between pupils

This policy will be deemed successful when it becomes an integral part of all we do to create a truly inclusive ethos and environment. This will be evident through

- Learning and teaching
- The curriculum
- The steps we take to address challenges to our values
- Relationships across the school community
- The celebration of difference

## **DEFINITIONS**

Promoting **DIVERSITY** means understanding and celebrating that our community is made up of unique individuals who belong to a number of identifiable groups e.g. race, religion, sexuality, gender.

**EQUALITY** is the same status, rights and responsibilities for all members of a society, group or family.

## **WHY ARE DIVERSITY and EQUALITY IMPORTANT?**

Everyone benefits from the promotion of equal rights and fair treatment for all members of our community. Promoting diversity and equality is about encouraging a fairer, more tolerant and safer society. Equality and diversity are not about penalising some to the benefit of other, but instead about creating an environment where everyone can thrive.

## CONTEXT

This policy is based upon four key documents.

- The Equality Act 2010
- Getting it Right for Every Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Respect for All: Anti – Bullying Policy, East Lothian Council

The **Equalities Act** covers how pupils are treated by the school, **Respect for All** addresses issues of peer to peer bullying and the **UNCRC** acts as a framework within which all policies and practices relating to children sit.

**THE EQUALITY ACT 2010** makes it unlawful for schools to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- in relation to admissions
- in the way it provides education for pupils
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The following characteristics are covered by the Act, meaning that any of the above actions motivated by these characteristics is unlawful.

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation (including lesbian, gay and bi-sexual)
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

These characteristics are collectively known as the **PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS**.

It is also unlawful to discriminate based on any protected characteristics of someone the pupil is associated with e.g. to treat a pupil differently because of the religion or belief of their parents.

The Act refers to four kinds of unlawful behaviour

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation

Schools are allowed to, and are sometimes required to, discriminate in favour of pupils with disabilities. This is the only protected characteristic this applies to.

The Equalities Act does not apply to

- **The curriculum** – what is taught cannot be challenged under the Act, but how it is taught can. This allows teachers to address controversial and challenging topics but these topics must not be used as a reason to discriminate, harass or victimise.
- **Acts of worship** – schools are free to have acts of worship and collective religious observance, and are not obliged to give equal time to all faiths. However, at Knox Academy

we are committed to celebrating all faiths, and promoting tolerance towards those of all faiths and none.

- **Uniform** – schools are free to develop their own policies on uniform and other issues relating to appearance but must ensure that blanket policies do not discriminate e.g. where the dress-code of those identifying as female are more restrictive or expensive than for other pupils.
- **Bullying** – The Act covers the relationship between the school and the pupils, not between pupils. East Lothian Council has a comprehensive anti-bullying policy that applies to all schools, see below, and we have a summary of this policy specific to Knox Academy available on the school website.

The above represents a summary of the Equalities Act and more information can be found by following the links below.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/315587/Equality\\_Act\\_Advice\\_Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf)

**GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD (GIRFEC) FRAMEWORK** is a framework to support families to ensure that young people getting the right support from the right people at the right time. The framework uses eight indicators to promote and measure a child or young person's wellbeing, known as the SHANARRI indicators. The indicators are

- SAFE
- HEALTHY
- ACHIEVEING
- NURTURED
- ACTIVE
- RESPECTED
- RESPONSIBLE
- INCLUDED

Diversity and equality are central to all factors relating to wellbeing.

**THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (UNCRC)** was ratified by the UK government in 1991, and at time of writing plans were in place to enshrine the convention in Scots' Law.

The UNCRC highlights the specific rights of children, and Knox Academy is committed to building these in to the life and work of the school. As of October 2019 Knox Academy had achieved the Silver Rights Respecting School Award, and is aiming for the Gold Award by the end of the 2019/2020 session.

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

#### **RESPECT FOR ALL – EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Knox Academy is committed to creating a safe and positive learning environment for all our young people. To this end we follow East Lothian Council's Anti-Bullying Policy.

[Achieving Excellence for All \(ka-net.org.uk\)](http://ka-net.org.uk)

We record all incidents of bullying and regularly review these records for evidence of patterns, particularly those relating to prejudice-based bullying.

## COMMITMENTS

To ensure we adhere to our legal obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and live by our own vision and values Knox Academy commits to

- **PRIORITISING** the promotion of diversity and equality issues
- **LEARNING** and **TEACHING** about diversity and equality issues
- **ACTING** to address challenges and improve practice
- **CELEBRATING** our differences

## PRINCIPLES

These commitments are based upon the following principles

- All learners are of equal value irrespective of their race; gender and gender identity; religion or belief; sexual orientation (including lesbian, gay and bi-sexual); level of disability. However, this does not mean we treat everyone the same, sometimes it means giving people extra help so that they have the same opportunities and outcomes as others.
- We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to any relevant characteristic or association. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, work and visit here.
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between all groups and communities.
- We foster a shared sense of inclusion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development
- We have high expectations of all our children. We expect all pupils to be ambitious and to make good progress and achieve/attain to their highest potential.
- We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.
- Knox Academy stands against prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping. We report, challenge and record all incidents of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

The Head Teacher will ensure that:

- The policy is fully implemented and promoted, making certain that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support.
- Appropriate action is taken in any cases of unlawful discrimination.
- All prejudice-based bullying incidents are recorded and that appropriate action is taken.
- Take a lead role in the school's self-evaluation procedures and staff development for equality and diversity
- Information is collected and monitored on attainment, attendance and exclusion in terms of equality.
- The Council's recruitment and selection policies are adhered to.
- Independent contractors, volunteers and visitors to the school are aware of this policy.

The Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator will:

- Develop and maintain up to date knowledge of equality law and best practice
- Co-ordinate the implementation of the equality and diversity policy
- Take a lead role in communicating the policy to other staff and monitoring outcomes
- Review and disseminate enrolment data
- Take a lead role in co-ordinating the approach to addressing prejudice-based bullying incidents including the recording and analysis of data
- Regularly and systematically analyse school data to identify diversity and equality issues and take a lead role in co-ordinating a response.

All Staff will:

- Model ambition, respect and community in all actions and our approach to developing and maintaining relationships.
- Maintain the highest expectations of achievement for all pupils
- Promote an ethos in the classroom that values equality, inclusion and diversity
- Challenge prejudice and discriminatory behaviour
- Deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-based bullying incidents
- Plan lessons that reflect the school commitments to equality and diversity
- Keep up to date with the law on equality and any changes to policy.

The Parent Council will:

- Promote the policy to all parents/carers and the wider community.

## APPENDIX 1 – Resources for Schools, Parents and Young People

- [Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education](#)
- [Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland](#)
- [Edinburgh University - Centre for Research in Education Inclusion and Diversity](#)
- [Education Scotland - How Good is Our School 4<sup>th</sup> Edition](#)
- [Education Scotland: Support for All](#)
- [Educational Action Challenging Homophobia \(EACH\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission - Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils Scotland](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission - Schools Technical Guidance](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission – Teaching resources, Secondary For Scotland’s Disabled Children \(FSDC\)](#)
- [Getting it Right for Every Child framework](#)
- [Getting it Right for Girls \(EIS\)](#)
- [Getting it Right for Looked After Children and Young People](#)
- [Holocaust Memorial Day Trust](#)
- [LGBT Youth Scotland - Schools](#)
- [National Approach to Anti-bullying](#)
- [Promoting Diversity and Equality: Action on Sectarianism](#)
- [Respect Me – Scotland’s anti-bullying service](#)
- [Scottish Refugee Council](#)
- [Show Racism the Red Card](#)
- [Skills Development Scotland – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [STEP – Scottish Travellers Education Programme](#)
- [Stonewall](#)
- [Tackling Gender Equality in Scotland’s School](#)
- [Together Scotland Scottish Alliance for Children’s Rights](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

## APPENDIX 2 – HGIOS 4: Quality Indicator 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

### Challenge questions for schools

How well do all staff know and understand GIRFEC, the wellbeing indicators, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child?

How well do all staff understand their role and responsibility in supporting learners' health and wellbeing?

How well do we know and take account of local and national documents and guidance?

How well do we ensure that all children feel safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included?

How well do children and young people show consideration for others and demonstrate positive behaviour and relationships?

How well do we listen to and involve children and young people in making decisions about their wellbeing, their lives and their future?

How well do we ensure that all staff undertake regular professional learning around legislation, statutory requirements and codes of practice?

Can we be sure that all staff guidance is fully relevant and up-to-date?

How well do we communicate with parents, partners and learning across these key themes?

How well do we know the steps we have taken have improved outcomes for children?

How well can we demonstrate improved attainment for groups and individuals facing barriers to learning, including poverty?

Have we successfully established an inclusive learning environment? How do we know?  
To what extent does our school celebrate diversity?

How well does our school ensure that the curriculum is designed to develop and promote equality and diversity, eliminate discrimination?

How do we ensure there is an ethos and culture of inclusion, participation and positive relationships across the whole learning community?