MAIDSTONE GRAMMAR SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1549

Equality Plan (2025) and Equality Objectives (2025-2029)

Drawn up by Miss R Johnson, Deputy Headteacher
Link Governor - Mrs H Crittall

February 2025
Review Date: May 2029

1. Statement

Maidstone Grammar School is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the school community and the wider community are treated equally, fairly, and with respect by the school and by each other. This applies to the school as a place of education, a business, and an employer. Prejudice, discrimination (direct or indirect), and victimisation are not tolerated, and we work hard to instill in our pupils a strong understanding of right and wrong, including the importance of inclusion, acceptance, kindness and compassion towards others. The school's main priority is to provide the best education and care that we can and establish a cooperative working relationship between home and school, to aid the development, progress, and needs of all the children in our care.

This Equality Plan sets out how the school will satisfy its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate all discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other behaviour prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to foster good relations between persons with and without protected characteristics and promote equality of opportunity regardless of whether a person has a protected characteristic (such as race, gender, transgender, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation). The school aims to comply with this duty, in both the delivery of its services and the employment of its staff. It is created by Maidstone Grammar School's Governing Body with the help of SLT in line with the Equality Act 2010 and is the foundation of all the school's other policies – particularly the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy and Information Report, Admissions Policy, Behaviour and Antibullying Policy.

Through the creation of this Plan, we have been able to develop a better understanding of what the challenges to equality are within the school and how we can best deal with these. This Plan will be reviewed at least every three years, or any time there is an update or change to equality legislation, to ensure that it is being effectively implemented and remains focused and up to date on issues surrounding equality both within the school and nationally.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Creating a school environment that promotes equality and denounces discrimination is a whole-school responsibility and requires all members of the school community to be actively involved in breaking down barriers to learning and barriers to social and emotional development that prejudice can create.
Individuals in the school are expected to take responsibility for supporting and promoting equality in school above and beyond the responsibilities listed below. The Headteacher and SLT have the day-to-day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of this Plan.

2.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body has a duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination, which is discharged through the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The Governing Body has a governor responsible for the SEN Policy and Information Report and the Single Equality Plan Policy, which is the SEND Governor. The Governors will:

- approve this Plan with the help of the Headteacher and SLT and ensure that it is adopted correctly throughout the school;
- ensure the school complies with all equality legislation and the school's equality objectives as set out in this Plan;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan at intervals via updates by the Deputy Head (pastoral) who reports to Committee B, including on disadvantaged groups;
- ensure that parents are informed of any incident related to this Plan which could directly affect their child;
- report to parents, carers, and the wider community when relevant on aspects covered by the plan such as support, progress of students in disadvantaged groups and Equality, Inclusion and Diversity within the school.
- Communications with stakeholders about any aspects covered by the Plan will be provided at a time and in the format that the SLT / Pastoral Deputy Headteacher judge appropriate.

2.2 The Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- raising awareness of all the duties within the whole school community;

• ensuring understanding of the broad legal definition of disability;
• sensitively encouraging declaration of protected characteristics by pupils, parents/carers and staff;
• ensuring that the principles of relevance, proportionality, reasonable adjustment and positive action are applied appropriately;
• providing appropriate training for staff, Governors and other members of the school community;
• monitoring the outcomes and impact of provisions, criteria and practices on all groups, and responding with appropriate actions;
• in the event of expectations not being met, ensuring appropriate action is taken.

The Deputy Headteacher Pastoral is also the SENCO, responsible for reporting on SEND. However, the school recognises that Equality is a whole school priority and not a function expected of one member of SLT alone.

2.3 **All Members of the School Community**

The school regards equality for all as a responsibility for all members of the Maidstone Grammar School community (staff, volunteers, pupils etc) who should contribute to ensuring that our school is a fair, just and cohesive community:

2.3.1 **Staff**

School staff will:

- ensure that teaching and learning activities and wider support / pastoral work within the school promote understanding, challenge and eradicate discrimination and prioritise realising potential in individual students, groups and all students as far as reasonably possible;
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour;
- tackle bias and stereotyping;
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies as outlined in the school's Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy;
- show a commitment to undertake development and training within this area;
- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to pupils;
- promote a positive working environment;
- report back to their line managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, either by staff, pupils, or any other member of the school community, so that these incidents can be reviewed, and action taken where necessary.

2.3.2 **Students**

Students at the school will:

- adhere to the MGS Code of Conduct and school Behaviour and Antibullying Policy;
- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination;
- promote a positive work environment and a positive attitude towards equality both when in school and off the school site
- report to school staff any incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour, discrimination or victimisation that they know to have occurred using the school reporting procedures;
- engage with the anti-bullying strategies outlined in the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy;
- set a good example regarding behaviour and social awareness to younger pupils and their peers.

2.3.3 **Parents, carers, and visitors**

Parents, carers, and visitors to the school are expected to:

- attend any relevant meetings/awareness-raising sessions that they are invited to.
- work with the school to resolve any incident relating to discrimination or victimisation that their child is involved in.

3. Key groups at risk

Whilst the school recognises that any person or group of people can become victim to discrimination, victimisation or unfair treatment, people may be more at risk of becoming victims of inequality due to:

- Race
- Disability

- Gender and transgender
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

You can find all the information about our school's SEN provision including our provision for inclusion [and reasonable adjustments] in the school's SEN Policy and Information Report and the school's Accessibility Plan. All of these are available on the school website.

Promoting equality and social awareness in school and within the local community is everybody's responsibility.

4. Community cohesion

The school expects all its students and staff to act respectfully towards members of the wider community that the school is part of.

5. Inclusion

Promoting and practising inclusion in school lessons, around the school site, during all school activities and into the wider community is a key part of developing a positive attitude towards equality and people from different backgrounds and is everyone's responsibility.

6. Student voice

Through our support of student voice, House Councils and the School Council we encourage our students to have confidence in voicing their opinions and take responsibility for contributing positively to the school and wider community. It is important that we teach students how to engage in mature social interactions and get along with a variety of different types of people. This is developed in a variety of ways including through student voice, through our vertical pastoral structure which supports interactions between students from different year groups and staff, through our tutor time, assembly and PSHCE programmes.

7. Recruitment

Maidstone Grammar School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures are kept under review to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation. Maidstone Grammar School acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and we will work proactively to address and challenge this.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

8. Staff

Equal opportunities for staff

As part of our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment, the school will ensure that:

- all staff appointments and promotions are made because of merit and ability and in compliance with the law;
- staffing of the school and school governance reflects the diversity of our community, wherever reasonably possible;
- as an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce including the duty to make reasonable adjustments;
- we respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice;
- we ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

9. Staff discipline and suspension
Maidstone Grammar School is committed to ensuring that all school staff are treated fairly and consistently and anyone not adhering to the school's values and policies is held to account through our Staff Discipline, Conduct, and Grievance Policy.

The education and wellbeing of our students is our main priority. The school's Staff Appraisal Policy provides more information on how the school monitors staff performance. We expect that staff will feel confident to voice complaints and grievances in the confidential environment of the school and that they will trust the school to deal with their grievances fully, promptly, and fairly.

10. Behaviour, exclusions and attendance
The school's policies take full account of the duties under the Equality Act 2010. We make reasonable adjustments for students with SEN and disabilities. We closely monitor data on suspensions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and will act to address any concerns that arise in this area.

11. The curriculum
Equality is explored as a means of personal and social development. This is prominent in our PSHCE curriculum, our assembly programme and our tutor time programme and is also discussed within other subject courses as appropriate.

12. Whole School Equality Objectives
The school monitors the progress and impact of its Equality Plan through the outcomes of the following objectives as well as other key performance indicators outlined in the School's Development Plan.

The School is committed to providing an environment that welcomes, protects and respects all people. In order to do this we have identified the following aspirational Equality Objectives, under this plan, to be achieved by 2028:

i) By 2028, the performance of female students will continue to be closely in line with male students at A Level.

In 2024 A Level data showed:
Average A Level Points for all male students was 36.09
Average A Level Points for all female students was 37.55

ii) By 2028, the performance of disadvantaged students at GCSE will be closely in line with non-disadvantaged students in their GCSEs. The school will continue to focus on closing the "gap".

In 2024 GCSE level data showed:
Average GCSE Point score for PPG students = 5.72
Average GCSE Points score for all students = 6.28

iii) By 2028 the School will aim to achieve a decrease in racial incidents to no more than 5% of all significant incidents investigated

In 2023-2024 Racial Incident comprised 11% of all incidents investigated.

iv) In relation to other hate incidents including homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and anti-disability incidents, the School aims to achieve that these continue to make up no more than 2% of all significant incidents investigated.

In 2023-2024 these categories made up 2% of all incidents investigated.

v) **The School will continue to monitor and promote the involvement of all groups of students in the extra-curricular life of the school, including students with SEND and PPG, to closely meet or exceed current levels of engagement as given below.**
In 2023-2024:
-63% of Young Carers engaged in one or more extra curricular activity.

-62% of students currently on the SEN register engaged in one or more extra curricular activity. This increased to 73% for those with a Personalised SEN Plan or Education Health Care Plan.

-100% of our Looked After / Previously Looked After Children engaged in one or more extra curricular activity.

-72% of our PPG (including Free School Meal, Service and Ever students engaged in one or more extra curricular activity.

vi) The School will ensure that any new building work will be designed with accessibility as a key priority and this will be evidenced from the plans and designs of buildings completed in this period.

The school's development plan self-review procedures and self-evaluation form are used to support the assessment of the school's progress towards these objectives. The school recognises the need for sensitivity and places a high regard on personal privacy in its information gathering processes. This will enable accurate assessment of the impact of policy whilst maintaining any preference for anonymity.

13. Outcomes
One of the most important indicators of how successful we are as a school in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups. Appropriate steps are taken at an individual, group or whole school level (as appropriate) to promote an inclusive environment where all members of the community can flourish and to take action where any concerns are identified.

14. Reporting on our progress
The school provides a copy of the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement on the school's website. The Deputy Head Pastoral and Deputy Head Curriculum make regular reports to update Governors.

15. This Plan will be reviewed:

- every three years
- after incidents that relate to, or impact on, equality in school
- after any significant changes to workplace, working practices or staffing.