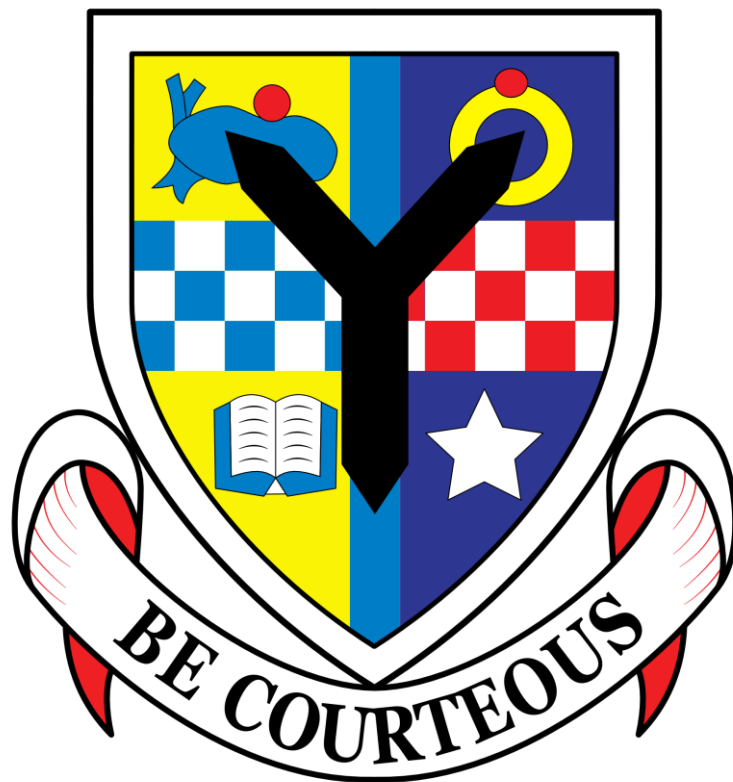


Stewarton Academy Promoting Equality and Diversity



Policy Date: Dec 2022 Review Date: Dec 2025



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1. Policy statement

Stewarton Academy is committed to creating an environment for the whole school community that demonstrates shared values of equality and respect.

Our school recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and fairness, and aims to meet the needs of every child in line with the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).

We work together with our children and young people, families and staff to ensure that inclusion and equality are part of all our activities. Our policy aims to:

- Promote positive attitudes and behaviours towards equality and diversity
- Promote understanding of equality and diversity through the school curriculum and ethos
- Help the school to meet these aims and fulfil our legal obligations

This policy and all associated procedures apply to all stakeholders who engage with Stewarton Academy, and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidelines:

- Stewarton Academy Anti-Bullying Policy
- Stewarton Academy Better Behaviour Policy
- EAC Anti-Bullying – Respect for All Policy
- EAC Standard Circulars including Managing Procedures and Provision for School Exclusions (8), Getting It Right For Every Child - (GIRFEC) (76)
- Equality Provisions linked to Staffing and Recruitment
- The Cost of the School Day Resources

2. Background and legislation

This policy has been written as part of our school's on-going commitment to demonstrating good practice, advancing equality and valuing diversity.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

We are committed to meeting the statutory duties of the Equality Act 2010 and this policy includes information about how we will comply with our duties and also provides guidance about our approach to promoting equality and diversity.

We recognise that these duties also reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

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3. Key principles

Stewarton Academy is committed to ensuring that all children are entitled to receive a high quality education in an inclusive environment which ensures that every one reaches their potential.

Our approach to equality and diversity is based on the following key principles:

- **All learners are of equal value.** 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 disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual identity. Diversity is respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit Stewarton Academy.
- **We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- **We foster a shared sense of inclusion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- **We have the highest expectations of all our young people.** We create an ethos of achievement for all young people within a climate of high expectations and value a broad range of talents, abilities and achievements. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of young people raises standards across the whole school.
- **We tackle negative prejudice and stereotyping.** We challenge and report all incidents of prejudice based bullying, for example racist, homophobic or bullying of people because of a disability. We also challenge gender-based and other stereotypes. We aim to counter conscious and unconscious discrimination that may prevent any individual or any group of pupils from thriving in the school.

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4. Embedding equality and diversity

Scotland is a multi-cultural society and Stewarton Academy recognises the importance of preparing our young people to appreciate and celebrate diversity in all its forms, in order that our young people contribute effectively to the diverse and multi-cultural society that they are destined to play a part.

To achieve these aims we will:

Involve all stakeholders

- In the development, review, evaluation and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures
- In the development of inclusive approaches
- In accurate reporting and recording of prejudiced based bullying

Embed equality and diversity in Learning and Teaching

- Use inclusive and diverse resources, images and contexts to provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging.
- Provide a suitable differentiated curriculum and appropriate support including the use of digital learning to improve access to education.
- Planning a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum to provide equal opportunity for all young people to maximise their potential regardless of age, sex, race, religion or disability. Including opportunities for young people to explore what people have in common and where they differ, to see beyond labels and stereotypes, to learn to analyse why discrimination occurs and gain insight into the experience of being discriminated against.
- Providing opportunities to develop the knowledge, confidence and values needed to understand and challenge discrimination and value diversity. This includes tackling racism and sectarianism; disability awareness, religious prejudice, challenging gender stereotypes and tackling homophobic bullying.
- Themes around equality, inclusion and diversity are embedded into topics within each curriculum area, specifically Health and Wellbeing, Wider Achievement, Religious and Moral Education and Social Subjects.

Promote personal achievement and participation in the ethos and life of the school

- Offer opportunities to foster individual talents and develop young peoples' self-esteem through the celebration of achievements at assemblies, via the school newsletter, social media and through the house system.
- Valuing and celebrating diversity through Personal and Social Education, Religious and Moral Education and Values Assemblies to engage learners in activities directly related to injustice and inequality.

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- Promote a climate and learning environment in which young people feel safe and secure by supporting young people to show respect for others and understand different beliefs and cultures.
- Ensure our young people participate in developing our vision, values and aims to build relationships and ensure Stewarton Academy is representative of all groups and we have a focus on respecting rights.
- Encourage our young people to contribute to the life and work of the school and exercise their responsibilities as members of a community. This includes opportunities to participate responsibly in decision-making through the Stewarton Academy Senate, to contribute as leaders and role models and play an active part in putting the values of the school community into practice.
- Offer opportunities for pupils to take part in the full community of the school through peer-mentoring and buddying, fundraising initiatives to raise awareness and support for global humanitarian issues and extra-curricular activities such as the Equalities and LGBTQ+ group, the Eco group, choirs and sports.
- Having achieved the Silver Aware Rights Respecting School, staff and young people are working towards achieving the Gold: Rights Respecting School Award to embed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in the policy, values practice and culture of Stewarton Academy.
- Consult regularly with pupil-led groups on matters pertaining to equality, diversity and rights.

Work with a range of partners

- To create opportunities for our young people to develop and engage in global citizenship, including campaigns against discrimination to educate others and practise standing up for themselves and others. For example, the Clean Green Award and the aforementioned Rights Respecting School Award work.
- To build networks and partnerships between services to encourage joint thinking and sharing of knowledge and skills. Partner agencies include Barnardos, UNICEF, Stonewall and the local chaplaincy.

5. Leadership, 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 access appropriate training and support in relation to equality and diversity via Learn Pro
- Appropriate action is taken in any cases of unlawful discrimination
- All prejudice-based bullying incidents are recorded and that appropriate action is taken

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- The Council's recruitment and selection policies are adhered to
- Collect and monitor statistics on attainment, attendance and exclusion in terms of equality

The DHT with responsibility for Equality and Diversity 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 staff and monitoring outcomes
- Take a lead role in addressing prejudice-based bullying incidents including the recording and investigation
- Take a lead role in the school's self-evaluation procedures and staff development for equality and diversity

All staff will:

- 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
- Promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society

6. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

Stewarton Academy is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling our legal duties including:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- Prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices reflecting sexism, homophobia and transphobia.

Procedure for addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

- Incident is reported to a member of Pastoral Staff and SMT
- Action taken is within the context of the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- The person demonstrating bullying behaviour will be made aware of the effect the incident has on the victim

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- The parents/carers of the young person demonstrating bullying behaviour will be informed of the incident and be asked to co-operate with the school in discussing the incident with the pupil at home
- The incident will be logged in the Bullying and Equalities or Racial Incidents screen via SEEMIS, the report will describe the incident and action/outcome. Incidents logged as “Being Addressed”, “Not Resolved” or “Resolved” will be confirmed incidents. Bullying incidents marked as “unfounded” will be unconfirmed. At the end of each term, EAC will collate incidents recorded for statistical information only – children are not named in this record.

7. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

Promoting diversity and equalities is the responsibility of all and will be reviewed regularly. Equalities and Diversity staff training will take place within a three year cycle and must be included in induction processes for new staff. A Policy Review will take place within a three year cycle. The staff and pupils will lead the process with support from the DHT with responsibility for Equality. All stakeholders will be consulted about equality and diversity issues in the school.

Each young person’s progress is monitored and tracked. The resulting data is analysed in respect of gender, race, SIMD, additional needs, looked-after status etc. In addition to monitoring to rule out any potential disadvantage, quality assurance procedures ensure the school meets its duty to positively promote diversity. (E.g. lesson observations record evidence of differentiation and resources are reviewed to ensure appropriateness and inclusivity.) The data collected is used to inform further school planning, target-setting and decision-making.

All new policies will continue to be impact assessed and any priorities identified through the impact assessments addressed through the school improvement plan.

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