

Equality & Diversity Policy

Organisation:	Elevated Minds CIC
School:	Elevated Futures
Approved by:	Doreen Sinclair-McCollin, CEO
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1. Statement of Intent

At Elevated Futures Educational Provision, equality and diversity are not passive concepts; they are the active foundation of our strengths-based ethos. We are unashamedly ambitious for *every* pupil, regardless of their background, identity, or needs.

We reject a deficit model. We are committed to creating a fully inclusive, supportive, and safe environment where every member of our community feels seen, valued, and empowered to achieve their full potential.

This policy outlines how we comply with the law, but more importantly, how we use the Dynamic Development Plan (DDP) as our primary mechanism to advance equity and celebrate the unique "superpowers" that diversity brings to our provision.

2. Legal Framework and Compliance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation, including:

- **The Equality Act 2010**, which prohibits discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- **The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**, which (in spirit and as best practice) requires us to:
 1. **Eliminate** unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
 2. **Advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 3. **Foster** good relations between all groups.
- **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014** (Part 3, Para 5), which requires us to promote respect for the protected characteristics.
- **The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years** (2015)
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education** (Statutory guidance)

3. Aims and Principles (The DDP Philosophy)

Our approach to equality is defined by the following aims:

- **To Eliminate Discrimination:** To maintain a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or prejudice-based bullying.
- **To Advance Equity:** To recognise that "equality" does not mean treating everyone the same. We use the **DDP as our core tool for equity**, providing the precise, individualised support each pupil needs to access our ambitious curriculum and overcome their unique barriers.
- **To Foster Good Relations:** To move beyond "tolerance" to **active celebration**. We proactively promote empathy, respect, and a deep understanding of diversity through our curriculum and our DDP-led, restorative culture.
- **To Embed Inclusion:** To ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, are fully integrated into every aspect of school life.

4. The Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine protected characteristics. We are committed to opposing all discrimination based on:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Marriage and Civil Partnership
5. Pregnancy and Maternity
6. Race
7. Religion or Belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual Orientation

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **The Proprietor and SLT:** Are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented, that staff are trained, and that our provision is free from discrimination.
- **The Headteacher:** Is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy, leading the inclusive, strengths-based culture.
- **The SENCo:** Has a key role in supporting the "disability" characteristic, ensuring the DDP is used to make all reasonable adjustments and provide the support mandated in EHCPs.
- **All Staff (Teachers, TAs, HLTAs, Therapists):**
 - Are responsible for modelling inclusive, respectful behaviour.
 - Are required to implement the DDP framework to advance equity in their practice.
 - Must actively challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination.
- **Pupils:** Are taught to respect others and are supported by our DDP-led curriculum to understand the value of diversity.
- **Parents/Carers:** We will work in partnership with parents to promote our equality aims and will ensure all communication is accessible.

6. Our DDP-Led Approach to Advancing Equality

We fulfil our equality duties through the following practical, DDP-led actions:

1. **The DDP as an Equity Tool:** The **Dynamic Development Plan (DDP)** is our primary mechanism for *advancing equality of opportunity*. It moves beyond labels to see the individual pupil. The DDP is co-produced to identify a pupil's specific barriers (whether related to SEND, language, or social-emotional needs) and, critically, their *strengths*. It then outlines the precise provision and reasonable adjustments they need to thrive.
2. **An Inclusive and Representative Curriculum:** We ensure our curriculum (as outlined in our Curriculum Policy) is broad, balanced, and representative. We actively select resources, texts, and themes (e.g., using our Southwark location) that challenge stereotypes and celebrate diverse cultures, identities, and histories.
3. **Strengths-Based Pedagogy:** Our teaching (by Teachers, TAs, and HLTAs) focuses on a pupil's "superpowers" as the access point for learning. This DDP-led approach ensures pupils who might otherwise be disadvantaged (e.g., pupils with communication difficulties, or for whom English is an Additional Language) have a valid and ambitious pathway to success.
4. **Accessible Provision:** We will make all reasonable adjustments to our physical environment, our curriculum, and our communication methods to ensure no pupil or parent is disadvantaged.
5. **Fair Recruitment:** We are an equal-opportunities employer. All staff appointments are made on the basis of merit, ensuring a fair and transparent process.

7. Responding to Discrimination and Harassment

- All prejudice-based incidents, including bullying, will be taken extremely seriously, recorded, and acted upon immediately, in line with our **Anti-Bullying** and **Behaviour and Relationships** policies.
- We will not just issue sanctions. Our response will be **DDP-led and restorative**.
- **For the victim:** We will provide immediate pastoral support and use the DDP to rebuild confidence and resilience.
- **For the perpetrator:** We will use the incident as a "teachable moment." A restorative process, guided by the DDP, will be initiated to educate the pupil on the impact of their actions, develop their empathy, and repair the harm caused.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact

The SLT will monitor the impact of this policy by:

- **Tracking Data:** Maintaining a log of all discriminatory or prejudice-based incidents and analysing this for patterns.
- **Analysing Pupil Progress:** Regularly reviewing academic and personal progress data (via the DDP) to ensure no group with a protected characteristic is being disadvantaged.
- **Reviewing Provision:** Ensuring DDPs and risk assessments are effectively identifying and removing barriers.
- **Gathering Feedback:** Using pupil and parent voice to evaluate our inclusive culture.

9. Complaints

We will investigate all complaints of discrimination or harassment thoroughly and fairly. All complaints will be handled in accordance with our formal **Complaints Policy**.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SLT and Proprietor to ensure it remains compliant with the law and effective in practice.

Approval Sign-Off

Name	Position	Signature	Date