

# EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING POLICY FOR STAFF

## Our commitment:

We want Downe House to be an inclusive and supportive place to work. We are committed to encouraging equity, diversity, inclusion and a sense of belonging among all members of the School community, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our staff to be representative of all sections of society, and for each staff member to feel respected, respect others, be able to give their best and to feel that they can be their true self in the workplace.

The School will not tolerate unlawful discrimination of staff, pupils, families, visitors and other key stakeholders.

The School aims to embed equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging in all its activities.

## The purpose of the Policy is to:

- To provide equity, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, voluntary, part-time or full-time.
- To provide equity, fairness and respect for all pupils and their families.
- To encourage a sense of 'belonging' in the School community.
- To not unlawfully discriminate under the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- To oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

## Definitions – What do we mean by the terms Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging ?

### Equity

Equality and equity are both about fairness and giving everyone access to the same opportunities. Equity goes one step further as it achieves this through treating people differently depending on their need. Equity means that no part of a persons' identity (for example gender, ethnicity or one of the other protected characteristics) gets in the way of their ability to thrive.

Review Date: May 2027 – Director of Human Resources

## Diversity

Diversity is about recognising difference and understanding and respecting those differences. It is acknowledging the benefit of having a range of perspectives in decision-making, widening participation and making a workforce representative of the organisation's service users and society as a whole.

## Inclusion

Inclusion is where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive at work. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters and they are able to perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances. An inclusive workplace has fair policies and practices in place and enables a diverse range of people to work together effectively

## Belonging

Belonging is the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group. It is when an individual can bring their authentic self to work.

## **Our Policy**

1. Downe House will aim to promote a culture that encourages and values equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging in all aspects of our work and in the workplace.
2. As a School, we aim to promote a culture that encourages and values equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging for all of our pupils. All members of staff whatever their position have an important part to play in this, by being role models, promoting best practice, and challenging poor practice.
3. We will aim to create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff, pupils and other stakeholders are recognised and valued.
4. Our commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging includes making employees aware about their rights and responsibilities under our policy and their responsibility to promote best practice, and challenge bias.
5. Staff have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a way that helps the School provide equity in employment, and prevents bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination of everyone in the School community including colleagues and pupils.
6. All staff should understand they, as well as Downe House, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment.

7. Everyone in the School community should feel able to raise any issues and concerns without fear of prejudice or reprisal.
8. The School will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. Such acts will be investigated and dealt with as misconduct under the School's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal.
9. The School will make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop to their full potential.
10. The School will review employment practices, procedures and policies when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them to take account of changes in the law.
11. Recruitment and employment decisions will be made based on fair and objective criteria. The School will normally ensure that job vacancies are appropriately advertised and/or publicised so that a range of candidates can apply. The School's selection procedures will be reviewed from time to time to ensure they are appropriate.
12. We may collect, monitor and analyse diversity data to monitor the make-up of the workforce in order to encourage equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in our Policy.
13. Monitoring will also include assessing how this Policy and any supporting action plans, are working in practice, reviewing them regularly, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

### Revision History

Revision Date	Description of changes	Reviewed By
January 2016 Reviewed annually until March 2023	Reviewed – no changes	Kate Tuttle
September 2023	Reviewed and updated to reflect 'equity' and 'belonging'	Kate Tuttle
September 2024	Removed hyperlinks and updated para 12	Maryanne Karian
May 2026	Reviewed, minor changes made to paras 4, 11, 13	Maryanne Karian

**Review Leader:** Director of Human Resources  
**Reviewed:** May 2026  
**Next Review:** May 2027