



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, JUSTICE, AND BELONGING POLICY (DEIJB)

P-19

Approved by:	Full Governing Body
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1 Introduction

Addressing discrimination and racism, promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion, requires not just policies and processes. It requires the creation of a culture where it is simply not acceptable.

Over time, that is about the way in which we educate our young people, both through a broad curriculum that reflects different perspectives from diverse societies across the world and through the use of assemblies, PSHE, and strong pastoral care. It is also important for us to create the space and a shared language for conversations around race and identity within our community and our wider society at large. We believe that this is the only way in which we will achieve lasting and sustainable change.

As an international school in Moldova, it is fundamental we create a diverse, safe, and respectful space for all.

1.1 Heritage International School is committed to being an inclusive international school community, as we see a diverse population of both pupils and staff as one of the School's greatest strengths. In order to ensure everyone can thrive and meet their full potential, it is essential that inclusion and equity of opportunity be at the core of all the School's activities.

1.2 This policy applies equally to current and prospective members of the School community, including parents.

1.3 This policy is available on request. All school policies can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

1.4 The School is committed to a zero tolerance policy in relation to less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristic under the protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are defined as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex and sexual orientation.

1.5 The School is committed to promoting and developing inclusion & equity of opportunity in all its functions and will seek to do this by:

- (a) Communicating its commitment to equity and diversity to all members of its community
- (b) Ensuring all staff and pupils are aware of the aims of this policy
- (c) Briefing for staff and pupils on the Equal Opportunities Policy
- (d) Developing monitoring, evaluation, and review mechanisms of school policies and procedures and decision-making
- (e) Demonstrating our zero tolerance attitude towards discrimination by taking all allegations seriously

Relevant definitions:

Bias - a belief or attitude that affects our understanding, decisions, and actions, and that exists without our conscious awareness.

Diversity is a reality created by individuals and groups from a broad spectrum of demographic and philosophical differences. These differences can exist along dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, language heritage, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of difference



contained within everyone. Finally, we acknowledge that categories of difference are not always fixed but can be fluid, and we respect individual rights to self-identification, as no one culture is intrinsically superior to another.

Educational equity - raising the achievement of all students while all students while (1) narrowing the gaps between the lowest and highest performing students, and (2) eliminating the racial or cultural predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories, including rates of graduation. The principle of educational equity goes beyond formal equality, where students are treated the same. Instead, educational equity fosters a barrier-free environment in which all students have the opportunity to benefit equally.

Equity lens - means an intentional focus on analyzing or diagnosing the impact of the design and implementation of policies on under-served and marginalized individuals and groups, and to identify and potentially eliminate barriers.

Inclusive education is education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honored and all individuals are respected. An inclusive school system ensures that each student can participate in the classroom and in the community in positive and contributing ways.

Microaggression - everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. In many cases, these hidden messages may invalidate the group identity or experiential reality of targeted persons, demean them on a personal or group level, communicate the perception that they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the majority group, threaten and intimidate, or relegate them to inferior status and treatment.

Belonging occurs when individuals feel valued, connected, psychologically safe beyond inclusion, respected, supported, and integral.

Justice occurs when there are fair, systemic remedies for inequities, and a process for restorative justice to address harms, bias, or accountability beyond discipline.

2 Responsibility

2.1 The Board and Leadership Team have responsibility for ensuring that the School operates within the legal framework for equity and for implementing the policy throughout the School.

2.2 Each member of the School community is responsible for being alert to and challenging discrimination; embracing diversity; respecting different faiths and beliefs; and upholding equity of opportunity for all.



3 The Legal Framework

3.1 Discrimination can take the following forms, including:

(a) Direct Discrimination - This occurs where a person is treated less favourably than others because of their (or a family member's) actual or perceived protected characteristic.

(b) Indirect Discrimination - This occurs by applying a provision, criterion or practice, which disadvantages people on the grounds of a protected characteristic and which cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

(c) Victimisation - This occurs where an individual has exercised their rights under equity legislation (or has indicated that they intend to do so) and is treated less favourably as a direct result. It applies equally to a person who is supporting (or indicates that they intend to support) another person who is exercising their rights under the legislation.

(d) Harassment – This is defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose OR effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating a hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

(e) Disability Discrimination - This includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

4 Aims and Values

4.1 The aims of this policy and the School's ethos as a whole are to:

(a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics

(b) Eliminate all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that an individual has a learning difficulty or special educational need

(c) Promote equity of opportunity for all members of the School community

(d) Provide a secure environment in which all our children can thrive and achieve all of the principles of Every Child Matters, and keep children safe in education

(e) Provide a learning environment where all individuals feel valued and feel they have a sense of belonging

(f) Prepare pupils for life in a diverse, global, and inclusive society in which everyone can take their place in the local, regional, national, and international community

(g) Include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equity and diversity

(h) Provide and promote positive information about the diversity of Moldovan, European, and global society

(i) Actively challenge discrimination and ensure that all members of the School community learn from these experiences

(j) Embed inclusion through all our activities

4.2 To achieve these aims, we will:

(a) Involve, where reasonably practicable, all members of the School community in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies, and procedures

(b) Publish and share school policies to the whole School community

(c) Collect and analyse data (such as admissions data and examination results) to monitor any potential disadvantage amongst the pupil body

(d) Help to overcome any potential barriers to learning by providing for pupils' diverse needs and learning styles, including any learning support needs and/or disabilities a pupil may have



- (e) Ensure the wider school curriculum promotes and celebrates equity and diversity
- (f) Operate a clear zero tolerance policy towards abusive or discriminatory behaviour
- (g) Work in partnership with families and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and help tackle discrimination

4.3 Our school ethos states that: *At Heritage, we create a warm, safe, caring, supportive and stimulating child-centred learning environment, underpinned by effective school systems and our global values, where all learners are treated with love and respect. Our school believes in the central importance of promoting understanding and respect for each family's cultural heritage, so that they are confident in both local identity and diversity, as well as a global citizen in the international, interdependent world.*

5 Admissions

5.1 The School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School's Admissions process. The School accepts applications from and admits pupils irrespective of any protected characteristic.

5.2 Parents must inform the School when completing the registration form of any special circumstances affecting their child (such as learning support needs) which may affect the child's ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School. The School will not offer a place to a child if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School cannot adequately cater for and/or meet their needs.

5.3 The School affords all pupils access to educational provision, including all benefits, services, and facilities irrespective of any protected characteristic, subject to the School's obligations under Equity legislation and considerations of safety and welfare.

5.4 The School will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

5.5 The School will seek to educate pupils in a multicultural, anti-racist environment using the curriculum, assemblies, PSHE programme, and external speakers to promote understanding and appreciation of other faiths, races, and cultures.

5.6 The School recognises that discrimination may be, for example, direct, indirect, or arising from disability, whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all their forms are unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policies.

5.7 The School will:

- (a) Treat all members of the School community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination
- (b) Endeavour to meet the needs of all children and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics listed above
- (c) Ensure those pupils with a statement of special educational needs (or Education, Health and Care Plan) receive necessary educational and welfare support
- (d) Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds



- (e) Challenge inappropriate discriminatory behaviour by pupils, staff and parents
- (f) Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum, including being able to participate in a full range of extra-curricular activities
- (g) Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, promote equity of opportunity, and are given appropriate training and support
- (h) Work with parents and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination in the School
- (i) Ensure that it reviews, monitors, and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive practices, restorative justice, and belonging.
- (j) Implement a process of restorative justice beyond discipline. This will be utilised whenever possible to restore relationships and trust.
- (k) Implement belonging teams consisting of students and staff tasked with providing student and staff voice on Belonging. These teams will evaluate current practice and provide steps for improvement.
- (l) Provide training for staff to ensure DEIJB practices are current and aligned with best practices standards.

5.8 The School is secular and inclusive, respecting the cultures, beliefs, and traditions of Moldova and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or no religion or faith).

6. Reasonable Adjustments

6.1 The School has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled pupils. The School will inform and consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, the School are able to make for their disabled child. The School will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and, for example, the resources available to the School. The School has a duty to make reasonable adjustments (case by case considerations) for staff or pupils who request to be known as gender neutral, gender fluid, are undergoing gender reassignment or are transgender.

6.2 The School is not legally required to make alterations to the School's physical environment as part of the reasonable adjustments duty. However, the School monitors and reviews the physical environment to consider what reasonable and proportionate steps can be taken to alleviate any substantial disadvantage caused to disabled pupils. The School has an Accessibility Plan in place [a copy of which can be made available upon request.]

7. Responsibilities

7.1 It is the **Board's** responsibility to:

- (a) Ensure that staff act as role models of inclusive behaviour and practice
- (b) Ensure that the School complies with its equity obligations
- (c) Ensure that the School's policies & procedures are monitored in light of this policy and the School's wider equity obligations
- (d) Be involved, together with the Director, in dealing with serious breaches of this policy.

The Director and LT

7.2 It is the Director's and delegated LT's responsibility to:

- (a) Ensure effective implementation of this policy and its procedures



- (b) Ensure that all staff are sufficiently aware and trained in equity & diversity
- (c) Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice within the School, be it by staff, pupils, parents, or visitors
- (d) Have procedures in place to deal effectively with any reported incidents of discrimination, victimization or harassment
- (e) Ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, this policy.

The Multidisciplinary Team

7.3. It is the responsibility of the Multidisciplinary Team to:

- (a) Ensure initial assessment of learners.
- (b) Refer typical cases to consulting services, as needed.
- (c) Create a favorable institutional environment for Inclusive Education (administration, children, teachers, parents).
- (d) Apply inclusive education strategies and evaluate the level of achievement of such strategies.
- (e) Develop and ensure the implementation of Individual Education Plans, and adapt current curriculum and evaluation methods.
- (f) Provide methodological support to teachers to ensure implementation of an individualized approach.
- (g) Regularly inform parents about the quality of inclusive education provided to children.
- (h) Evaluate the inclusive education process involving parents, children, staff, and teachers.

All Staff

7.4 It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- (a) Positively role model inclusive behaviour
- (b) Actively challenge any forms of discrimination, victimization, harassment, or bullying
- (c) Promote an inclusive curriculum, identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the School's culture
- (d) Commit to broadening their knowledge, confidence, and inclusive behaviour by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

Training and Development

The school will endeavor to:

- enhance and develop the skills, knowledge, and abilities of existing employees to realize their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status
- promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution made by our staff, trustees, parents, pupils, and wider community,
- equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organizational solutions to discriminatory practices and behavior, and to promote inclusive behavior generally.
- ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for learning and development in the context of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.
- respond to changing and emerging training needs, providing opportunities for reflection, feedback and shared learning.



Raising Concerns

- The School will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who believe they have been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment. Pupils should report discrimination through the pastoral system or directly to the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator.
- Staff should report discrimination to the HR Department
- Any member of the school community who harasses another on the grounds of any protected characteristic will be subject to the School's disciplinary measures under the School's Behaviour Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.
- If parents or visitors feel this policy has been breached, they should raise their concern with the Principal Deputy Head.
- All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the School's Senior Management Team.
- We recognise that pupils need to learn from mistakes to develop a strong sense of self and an awareness of how their behavior impacts others. Ill-considered, rather than deliberate, incidents should therefore be dealt with immediately and informally, where possible, taking the opportunity for a teaching or tutor discussion. These should all be reported through the pastoral systems.
- Pupil infringements of this policy will be recorded on the school's Anti-bullying/ Microaggressions Log. Staff and visitor infringements of this policy will be reported to HR.

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