APEX2100

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Academic Year: 2026–2027
Policy Owner: Apex2100 Education Board
Policy Lead: Apex2100 Senior Leadership Team
Review Frequency: At least annually and sooner where legislation, guidance or School practice changes
Presented to Board: September 2026
Next Scheduled Review: September 2027

---

1. Policy Statement

Apex2100 is committed to providing an inclusive, respectful and supportive environment in which every student and member of the School community is valued, treated with dignity and given the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

The School recognises and celebrates the diversity of its community and believes that differences in background, culture, nationality, ethnicity, race, religion or belief, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, special educational needs, age, family circumstances, socioeconomic background or other characteristics should not prevent any individual from participating fully in School life.

Inclusion is a responsibility shared by everyone at Apex2100.

The School will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying or exclusionary behaviour.

Apex2100 will seek to identify and remove barriers to participation, learning, wellbeing and achievement and will make reasonable adjustments where required.

---

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- promote equality, inclusion and respect throughout the School community;
- ensure that every student feels valued, safe and included;
- provide equality of opportunity;
- prevent unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- recognise and celebrate diversity;
- remove or reduce barriers to participation and achievement;
- support students with additional needs and disabilities;
- promote understanding between people with different backgrounds and experiences;
- ensure that differences are treated positively and respectfully;
- provide appropriate support where discrimination or exclusion occurs;
- ensure that staff understand their responsibilities in promoting inclusion;
- challenge stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory language;
- ensure that School policies and practices support equality and inclusion; and
- promote an environment in which students and staff can raise concerns without fear of retaliation.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

Apex2100 will have regard to applicable equality and human rights legislation and guidance, including, where applicable:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Children Act 1989;
- Children Act 2004;
- Education Act 2002;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability legislation and relevant statutory guidance;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- relevant statutory guidance concerning relationships, health education and personal development;
- relevant data protection legislation; and
- other applicable legislation and regulatory requirements.

The School will ensure that this policy is reviewed where changes to legislation or statutory guidance affect its operation.

4. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all students;
- all teaching and support staff;
- governors and Board members;
- volunteers;
- contractors;
- visitors;
- coaches and activity providers; and
- any other person working for or on behalf of Apex2100.

The policy applies to conduct:

- during School activities;
- on School premises;
- during trips, activities and events;
- during residential or boarding activities;
- during travel connected with School activities;
- through School communication systems;
- online where conduct affects members of the School community; and
- in any other circumstances where the School has a legitimate safeguarding, welfare, disciplinary or educational interest.

5. Protected Characteristics

The School recognises the protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

Some protected characteristics apply differently depending on the legal context.
The School will not discriminate unlawfully on the basis of any protected characteristic.
The School will also seek to prevent unfair treatment connected with characteristics or circumstances that may not themselves constitute protected characteristics, including family circumstances, socioeconomic background, nationality, language, caring responsibilities or other personal circumstances where appropriate.

---

6. Principles of Inclusion
Apex2100's approach to inclusion is based on the following principles:
Every student matters
Every student has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
Difference is valued
Diversity is a strength and the School seeks to create an environment where individuals can be themselves without fear of discrimination or humiliation.
Equality does not always mean identical treatment
The School recognises that students may require different forms or levels of support to achieve equitable access and opportunity.
Barriers should be addressed
Where a student experiences a barrier to participation, learning or wellbeing, the School will consider what reasonable and appropriate steps can be taken to address it.
Respect is expected
Students and adults are expected to communicate and behave respectfully towards others.
Discrimination will be challenged
Discriminatory language, behaviour, harassment and bullying will not be ignored or normalised.
Inclusion and safeguarding are connected
The School recognises that discrimination, isolation, prejudice and exclusion can contribute to safeguarding and wellbeing risks.

---

7. Equality of Opportunity
Apex2100 will seek to ensure that students have equitable access to:

- education;
- teaching and learning;
- enrichment activities;
- sport and physical activity;
- trips and educational visits;
- pastoral support;

- leadership opportunities;
- careers and progression advice;
- facilities and resources;
- residential opportunities where applicable; and
- wider School life.

The School will consider whether particular students or groups face barriers to participation and will take reasonable and proportionate steps to address those barriers.

---

8. Students with Disabilities and Additional Needs

Apex2100 recognises that disability and additional needs may create barriers to participation.
The School will:

- identify barriers where reasonably practicable;
- make reasonable adjustments where required;
- consider individual needs when planning activities;
- provide appropriate support;
- promote accessibility;
- involve students and parents or carers where appropriate;
- work with relevant professionals where necessary;
- ensure that disability-related behaviour is considered carefully and fairly; and
- ensure that students are not disadvantaged unnecessarily because of their disability.

The School recognises that disability may be visible or invisible.
Staff should not make assumptions about a student's abilities, needs or limitations.

---

9. Special Educational Needs

Students with special educational needs will be supported in accordance with the School's SEND arrangements.
Inclusion means providing appropriate support rather than expecting every student to learn, communicate or participate in exactly the same way.
Staff should consider:

- communication needs;
- learning differences;
- sensory needs;
- physical access;
- emotional and social needs;
- executive functioning;
- processing difficulties;
- reasonable adjustments; and
- the student's individual strengths.

Students with SEND will remain full members of the School community.

---

10. Race, Ethnicity and Nationality

Apex2100 celebrates cultural, ethnic and national diversity.

Racist behaviour, racial harassment, racial stereotyping and discriminatory language will not be tolerated.
The School will respond to concerns involving:

- racist language;
- racial harassment;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- cultural stereotyping;
- exclusion based on ethnicity or nationality;
- online racism; and
- hate-related behaviour.

Students will be encouraged to understand and respect different cultures and experiences.

---

11. Religion and Belief

Apex2100 respects the right of individuals to hold religious or non-religious beliefs.
The School will seek to provide an environment in which students and staff can practise or express their beliefs appropriately while respecting the rights and beliefs of others.
Students must not be subjected to harassment, bullying or discrimination because of religion or belief.
The School will not permit religious belief to be used as a justification for abusive, threatening or discriminatory behaviour.
Equally, students must not be ridiculed or disadvantaged because they hold no religious belief.

---

12. Sex, Gender and Sexual Orientation

Apex2100 is committed to ensuring that students and staff are treated with dignity and respect regardless of sex or sexual orientation.
The School will not tolerate:

- sexist behaviour;
- sexual harassment;
- homophobic behaviour;
- biphobic behaviour;
- discriminatory language;
- stereotyping; or
- bullying based on actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Concerns involving sexual harassment or abuse will also be managed under the School's safeguarding procedures where appropriate.
The School will ensure that its approach remains consistent with applicable law and current statutory guidance.

---

13. Gender Reassignment

Apex2100 will treat students and staff with dignity and respect in relation to gender reassignment.
The School will seek to prevent bullying, harassment or discriminatory treatment.

Where a student requires individual support, the School will consider their circumstances sensitively and appropriately, involving parents or carers where appropriate and consistent with the student's welfare and applicable legal requirements.
Any safeguarding concern will be managed under the School's safeguarding procedures.

---

14. Pregnancy and Maternity

Apex2100 will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or unfair treatment connected with pregnancy or maternity.
Where applicable, the School will consider reasonable arrangements to support a student or member of staff experiencing pregnancy or maternity-related circumstances.
The School will ensure that individual welfare, health, safety and educational needs are considered appropriately.

---

15. Socioeconomic Diversity

The School recognises that differences in financial or family circumstances can create barriers to participation.
Apex2100 will seek to avoid unnecessary exclusion from School activities because of financial circumstances.
Where appropriate, the School may consider:

- financial assistance;
- alternative arrangements;
- confidential support;
- payment arrangements; or
- other reasonable measures.

Students should not be stigmatised because of their family's financial circumstances.

---

16. Bullying, Harassment and Discriminatory Behaviour

Bullying and harassment are inconsistent with Apex2100's values.
Discriminatory bullying may include behaviour relating to:

- race or ethnicity;
- nationality;
- religion or belief;
- disability;
- SEND;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- family circumstances;
- appearance;
- socioeconomic background; or
- another characteristic or personal circumstance.

Discriminatory behaviour may occur:

- face to face;

- through social media;
- through messaging applications;
- through gaming platforms;
- through images or video;
- through exclusion or isolation; or
- through other forms of communication.

All concerns will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately.
Where behaviour may constitute child-on-child abuse, harassment or another safeguarding concern, the School's safeguarding procedures will apply.

---

17. Discriminatory Language
The use of discriminatory, degrading or hateful language is unacceptable.
Students and staff should understand that language can cause harm even where the speaker claims that it was intended as a joke.
The School will consider:

- what was said;
- the context;
- the impact;
- whether the behaviour was intentional;
- whether there is a pattern;
- the age and maturity of those involved; and
- whether there are wider safeguarding concerns.

Responses will be proportionate and educational as well as, where appropriate, disciplinary.

---

18. Inclusion in Teaching and Learning
Teaching staff should promote an inclusive learning environment.
Teaching and curriculum planning should, where appropriate:

- reflect a range of backgrounds and experiences;
- challenge stereotypes;
- encourage respectful discussion;
- promote critical thinking;
- provide appropriate differentiation;
- recognise different learning needs;
- avoid unnecessary barriers to participation; and
- promote equality and respect.

Teachers should be aware of unconscious assumptions or expectations that could disadvantage individual students.

---

19. Curriculum and Personal Development
Apex2100 will use appropriate educational opportunities to develop students' understanding of:

- equality;

- diversity;
- respect;
- healthy relationships;
- prejudice;
- discrimination;
- stereotypes;
- bullying;
- online behaviour;
- consent;
- individual rights and responsibilities;
- cultural awareness;
- different beliefs and perspectives; and
- responsible citizenship.

Students will be encouraged to challenge prejudice respectfully and to seek help when they experience or witness discriminatory behaviour.

---

20. Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to promote inclusion.
Staff must:

- treat students and colleagues with dignity and respect;
- challenge discriminatory behaviour appropriately;
- avoid discriminatory language;
- make reasonable adjustments where required;
- follow safeguarding procedures;
- report serious concerns;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- avoid assumptions based on stereotypes;
- promote respectful relationships; and
- support students who experience exclusion or discrimination.

Staff must not ignore discriminatory behaviour simply because it appears to be intended as humour.

---

21. Leadership Responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- promote an inclusive culture;
- ensure this policy is implemented;
- monitor relevant incidents and concerns;
- identify patterns of discrimination or exclusion;
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities;
- ensure reasonable adjustments are considered;
- review relevant School practices;
- provide appropriate support to affected students; and
- report significant equality and inclusion matters to the Education Board where appropriate.

The Education Board will provide strategic oversight and challenge the School to maintain effective equality and inclusion arrangements.

---

22. Reporting Concerns

Students should be encouraged to report concerns about discrimination, bullying, harassment or exclusion to:

- a trusted member of staff;
- their tutor or teacher;
- a member of the Senior Leadership Team;
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead where there is a safeguarding concern; or
- another appropriate adult within the School.

Staff must report concerns where the behaviour may constitute:

- safeguarding risk;
- serious bullying;
- harassment;
- discrimination;
- abuse;
- hate-related behaviour; or
- another serious welfare concern.

Students will not be blamed for reporting discrimination or harassment.

---

23. Responding to Concerns

Where a concern is raised, the School will:

1. listen to the concern;
2. establish the relevant facts;
3. consider the welfare of those involved;
4. assess whether safeguarding procedures are required;
5. consider whether other students may be affected;
6. take proportionate action;
7. provide appropriate support;
8. consider whether disciplinary action is required;
9. record significant concerns; and
10. monitor the situation where appropriate.

The School will avoid assumptions about either the person reporting a concern or the person whose behaviour is being challenged.

---

24. Intersectionality and Multiple Barriers

The School recognises that individuals may experience more than one form of disadvantage or discrimination.

For example, a student may experience barriers connected with disability, race, socioeconomic circumstances, religion or another characteristic simultaneously.

The School will consider the individual circumstances of each student rather than treating characteristics in isolation.

---

25. Freedom of Expression and Respectful Debate

Apex2100 supports respectful discussion and the development of students' ability to consider different opinions and perspectives.
Freedom of expression does not provide justification for:

- bullying;
- harassment;
- threats;
- unlawful discrimination;
- abuse;
- intimidation; or
- behaviour that creates a safeguarding risk.

Students will be encouraged to disagree respectfully and to understand that people may hold different beliefs and perspectives.

---

26. Online Inclusion

The School recognises that inclusion extends to online environments.
Online discriminatory behaviour may include:

- racist abuse;
- homophobic or biphobic abuse;
- sexist abuse;
- disability-related abuse;
- religious intolerance;
- targeted exclusion;
- discriminatory memes or images;
- hate-related content;
- harassment; and
- discriminatory group chats.

Where online behaviour affects students or the School community, the School may take appropriate action in accordance with its behaviour, safeguarding and online safety procedures.

---

27. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Concerns relating to equality, inclusion or discrimination will be handled sensitively.
Information will only be shared where appropriate and in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.
Where an issue also represents a safeguarding concern, safeguarding information-sharing requirements will take priority.

---

28. Relationship with Other School Policies

This policy should be read alongside, where applicable:

- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Complaints Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Recruitment Policy;
- Staff Disciplinary Procedures; and
- Health and Wellbeing procedures.

Where an inclusion concern also constitutes a safeguarding concern, the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy will apply.

---

29. Monitoring and Review

Apex2100 will monitor inclusion and diversity through appropriate information, including:

- bullying and behaviour incidents;
- discriminatory incidents;
- safeguarding concerns;
- complaints;
- student feedback;
- staff feedback;
- participation in activities;
- accessibility issues; and
- relevant patterns or trends.

The School will consider whether particular groups of students experience disproportionate barriers or negative outcomes.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where:

- legislation changes;
- statutory guidance changes;
- significant incidents occur;
- inspection or review identifies an area requiring improvement;
- School practice changes; or
- new equality or inclusion risks emerge.

---

30. Board Oversight

The Apex2100 Education Board has strategic responsibility for ensuring that the School maintains an effective approach to equality, inclusion and diversity.

The Board will:

- receive appropriate information about significant equality matters;
- provide challenge and oversight;
- ensure that the School's policies support inclusion;

- consider whether discriminatory patterns or barriers require action; and
- ensure that the policy is reviewed appropriately.

---

31. Policy Statement

Apex2100 believes that an inclusive School is one in which every individual is able to participate, contribute and develop without being disadvantaged by prejudice, discrimination or unnecessary barriers.

The School will actively promote respect, dignity, equality and belonging and will challenge behaviour that undermines these principles.

Every member of the Apex2100 community has a role in creating an environment in which difference is respected and every student has the opportunity to thrive.