



Whitewater Church of England Primary School

Equalities Policy

APPROVED

Date: June 2023

Next Review Date June 2027

Introduction

At Whitewater C of E Primary School, we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture.

For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the Hampshire's Employment Equality Policy, available on request.

National and Legal Context

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, race, gender (including issues of transgender), maternity and pregnancy, religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status (applicable only to staff).

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

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

School context

Whitewater C of E Primary School is a Controlled Local Authority maintained school for boys and girls aged 4-11 within Hampshire Local Authority and more specifically North East Hampshire. It is smaller than most other primary schools serving a vast rural catchment area. The maximum pupil admission number of 20 in each year group. The school has five classes with mixed year groups in Classes 1-4. The school community at Whitewater C of E Primary School are almost all White British from a majority Christian or atheist background. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs on the school roll falls just above the national average. The majority of the staff are female although the governing body is more balanced in gender distribution. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for funding through the pupil premium is below the national average.

Principles

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value

We see all pupils, potential pupils, their parents and carers, and staff as of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and gender identity
- Whatever their family background
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whether or not they have a connection with the forces community
- Whether or not they have SEN needs
- Whether or not English is their first language
- Whatever their age

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily mean treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or pupils may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

- Disability – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made
- Gender (including transgender) – we recognise that all individuals have different needs with regards to their gender and gender identity
- Religion and belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with
- Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that all individuals have different experiences as a result of ethnic and racial backgrounds
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers
- Sexual orientation – we respect that all individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference
- Marital status – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers will make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they maintain
- Pregnancy, maternity and adoption – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy, having recently given birth or through adoption.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- Positive attitudes and interaction between and within all groups
- An absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including pupils who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting pupils, we will take account of views expressed at school council; for parents, through parent governor representation and for staff, through staff governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Our current equality information can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement.

9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7).

The objectives can be found in Appendix B to this policy statement and take into account both national, county and school level priorities.

We will set ourselves new objectives every four years, but keep them under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- The delivery of the school curriculum
- The teaching and learning within the school
- Our school ethos and school values
- Our practice in relation to pupil progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to pupils, their families and staff
- Our policies and practice in relation to pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers
- Our contact with the wider school community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to, prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and pupils are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The headteacher is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- Deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons
- Support pupils in their class who have additional needs due to their protected characteristics

Equalities Information

Appendix A

We recognise the requirement from the Department of Education, for schools to publish information annually to demonstrate how they have met their equality duty.

This document seeks to demonstrate that Whitewater C of E Primary School:

- recognises the public sector equality duty;
- is aware of the requirements of the Act;
- is determined to comply with the non-discrimination provisions;
- is committed to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- is intent on fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our school meets its equality duty by:

1. **Promoting our school ethos** - we promote the core values of Fellowship, Courage and Creativity. Fellowship is of particular relevance here, where, underpinned by the teaching and skills of the Christian faith, we help our children to develop the values of honesty, tolerance, resilience, inclusiveness and compassion. This means that as a community we value and respect everybody. We believe the development of children's social skills is vitally important, enabling them to build relationships and to have empathy with others.
2. Embedding **our school policies**, specifically:
 - Equality Policy
 - Behaviour Management Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Pay Policy
 - Accessibility Plan
 - SEND Policy
 - SEN Information Report
 - SMSC and Spiritual Development
 - Mental Health & Wellbeing Policies
3. Demonstrating our commitment to all our equality responsibilities, as well as our specific **equality objectives** (published Jan 2024)
4. Focusing on our **school strategic priorities** outlined in our School Improvement Plan/"Getting to Good" plan, specifically to ensure that:
 - "Teachers have high expectations for all pupils & provide work that is well watched, especially those with SEND and most able challenged"
 - "Pupils benefit from high quality pastoral care, understand what it means to be a responsive, respectful and active citizen"
5. Targeting **Governor Monitoring visits** to evaluate the impact against said priority areas.
6. **Monitoring school performance** to assess how well pupils with different characteristics (PP, LAC, FSM, SEND, boys Vs girls) are performing in helping to identify whether there are any areas of inequality that need to be addressed. This includes:
 - School performance data;
 - Pupil book reviews;
 - Learning walks;
 - Discussions at Governing Body Committee Meetings and Sub-Committee Meetings (minuted);
 - Formal Governor Monitoring Visit reports and informal visits.
7. **Addressing any gaps** flagged by monitoring activities and associated next steps, to show that due regard is being had to the importance of advancing equality of opportunity.

8. Committing to **advancing equality of opportunity**, in particular removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have to ensure they are able to fully participate in school life (for example disabled or special educational need).
9. Aspiring to foster good relations - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it – is inherent in everyday school life and demonstrated in: -
 - Teaching and learning of the National Curriculum (specifically where tolerance and friendship promoted;
 - Whole school assemblies;
 - Collective Worship;
 - In class activities (such as Class Charter, Circle time)
10. Recognising external feedback published as part of **Ofsted Inspection Report** (May 2019), quotes include:
 - Ofsted Inspection (December '22)**
 - Pupils are proud to attend this welcoming and nurturing school...They behave well. Pupils treat each other with kindness and respect.
 - They are keen to show the core values of love, respect and courage.
 - One parent, whose view was reflected by many, stated that 'the culture of the school is one of its greatest strengths, its ethos and values are brought to life.
 - This is an inclusive school. Leaders quickly identify pupils who have additional learning needs. They access bespoke support for pupils to ensure they get the help that they need.
 - SIAMs Inspection (June '23)**
 - As a result of the vision, the pastoral care of staff and pupils is particularly good. This leads to strong relationships where pupils feel love and respect for themselves, for others and the world.
 - Everyone is encouraged to treat others with dignity and respect so that they flourish.

NOTE: The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require Governing Bodies to publish equality information on an annual basis.

Equality Objectives

Appendix B

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marital status, sexual orientation, religion and belief and sexual orientation).

We have also involved staff, pupils, parents and others in the following ways:

- Promote tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objective(s):

Objective 1: To ensure enrichment and out of school activities are made accessible to all pupils, including those with disabilities and special educational needs, to eliminate discrimination and ensure the best possible educational outcomes, by:

- Ensuring consideration is given to equality when arranging school visits and school-based activities;
- Addressing any barriers to pupils' engagement in school visits and school-based activities through the planning and risk assessment processes.

The school is slightly below the national percentage of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (13.8% Jan 2019 compared to national 14.6%¹). Registers for visits and school events show that pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are fully involved in the wide range of activities the school offers. Educational Visit Leader and Senior Leaders will monitor relevant paper work to ensure that equality considerations are made on all risk assessments for school visits and school-based activities.

Objective 2: To improve knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable pupils to appreciate and value difference and diversity, by:

- Promoting equality with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, sexuality including transgender, disability, religion and ethnicity in our school curriculum.
- Promoting equality with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, sexuality including transgender, disability, religion and ethnicity in our assemblies, making links to our core values of fellowship, courage and creativity.
- Monitoring and evaluating pupils' attitudes and knowledge around diversity and equality.

Currently, there is an under-representation of ethnic groups within the school, when compared to other schools nationally, however there is a representation of pupils from different groups including both genders, pupils with a disability and pupils from different faiths. Leaders will monitor coverage of equalities through curriculum monitoring and assembly monitoring. Pupil voice and book monitoring will be used to evaluate pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes to diversity issues. Reporting on equalities information through reports to full governing bodies and teaching and learning curriculum. Behaviour records will be monitored and where there are concerns, these will be addressed with follow up support to individual pupils.

Monitoring arrangements

In addition to the monitoring arrangements outlined above, the following monitoring arrangements will be in place:

- The headteacher, in accordance with the governing body will update the equality information we publish, at least every year.
- This document will be reviewed by the governing body at least every 4 years.
- This document will be approved by the headteacher and/or governing body.

¹ DfE National Statistics 'Special Educational Needs in England: January 2018'