



Policy: Equality & Diversity

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Chair of Governors:	Mrs S Saiger
Head Teacher:	Mrs L Rodham

Policy for Equality and Diversity

Rationale

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry stressed,

*“...if racism is to be eliminated from our society there must be a co-ordinated effort to prevent its growth. This needs to go beyond the police services.....it is incumbent upon every institution to examine their policies and practices to guard against disadvantaging **any section** of our communities.”*

Also, in Stonewall's "The experiences of gay young people in Britain's schools in 2012" Ben Summerskill Chief Executive states,

“As the education landscape evolves it's critical that all the key players – from the Department for Education, to academy chains, to individual schools – don't lose sight of their own role in tackling homophobic bullying. Building on the good work already being done, learning from the best and pushing others to improve, we can continue the progress of the last five years in creating learning environments across Britain where all young people are able to achieve their full potential.”

Wellfield School has a responsibility to establish a whole school climate in which diversity is welcomed and valued, and where inclusion and equality are promoted so that good social, personal and academic outcomes for all pupils can be secured. We aim to make Wellfield a place where:

- Learning is paramount;
- Behaviour is outstanding;
- Praise outweighs criticism;
- Students feel happy, keen and fulfilled;
- We are all safe from aggression, racism and bullying;
- We are all helpful and considerate;
- Students want to work hard, take responsibility and play a full part in school life.

We are all committed to the human rights of all adults and children within our school community and recognise our responsibility to respond to those whose rights are violated. Tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all pupils to maximise their potential regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion, disability or sexual orientation including all members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT) community. We have a duty to meet the needs of all in a sensitive and inclusive way, taking into account their cultural backgrounds so that everyone achieves to their maximum potential.

We aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life.

Context

Wellfield School is located in the east of County Durham and the overwhelming majority of pupils and staff are from a white British background. The school has a Resource Base for Pupils with Physical Difficulties with 10 places. As well as pupils in our Resource Base there are pupils with other disabilities e.g. hearing and visual impairment, as well as a small number of students who have English as an additional language.

The legal framework for this policy is:

Education Act 2011
Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (amended in 2005)
Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
Children Act 2004
Equality Act 2010
Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Purposes

- To provide a secure environment in which all children can flourish and achieve in line with the school's vision.
- To provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging.
- To prepare children for life in a diverse society in which children are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community.
- To provide positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender (including transgender), ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, ability and age. Also any incidents regarding pregnancy or maternity issues. In the case of adults, also marriage and civil partnerships.
- To actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage.
- To ensure inclusion runs through all activities and systems.
- To ensure that no pupils, staff, parents, guardians or carers or any other person through their contact with the school receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers race, ethnic or national origin, language, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation (including all members of the LGBT community), marital status, disability, age, responsibility for children or other dependents, trade union or political activities, social class, where the person lives or spent convictions.
- To protect all Wellfield pupils from abuse and significant harm by outlining procedures for dealing with alleged/suspected abuse.
- To work alongside the Prevent Policy to reduce the risk of radicalisation.

Guidelines

- The LA's admissions policy, which is fair and equitable, will be followed.
- There will be equal opportunities in staff recruitment, professional development and membership of the Governing Body.
- Information will be provided in different, accessible formats if requested.
- All areas of the school are accessible to all.
- Staff will be vigilant in all areas of the school for any type of harassment or bullying. Any incidents from overt name-calling to more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences will be dealt with swiftly via the school's Behaviour for Learning procedures.
- All racist incidents will be recorded on the LS RI 1 Form and forwarded to the LA.
- A record of these incidents and the sanctions imposed will be kept by the designated member of staff.
- All staff will have high expectations of behaviour to foster respect for others.
- Data will be analysed to ensure all groups are progressing and no group is subject to disadvantage.
- The curriculum will include provision to promote and celebrate diversity.
- Awareness raising with all staff, pupils and parents/carers will take place on a regular basis. The school also avails itself of professional development and advice available from the LA.
- The school recognises and may celebrate major religious and cultural festivals of ethnic minority groups and develops pupils' understanding and appreciation of different cultures through assemblies and subject teaching, particularly English, PSCHME, History and RE.
- Advice will be sought from Advisory Teachers to ensure inclusion and realisation of potential of all pupils e.g. for pupils with EAL, disabilities.

Link to Prevent Policy

Schools have a vital role to play in protecting children and young people from the risks of extremism and radicalization. This role is underpinned by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The school has a clear Prevent Policy relating to this (please refer to this for more details). Students identified as possibly being a risk of radicalization will be referred as per agreed procedures and the school will work with other agencies to provide appropriate support. The school also seeks to reduce such risk through ensuring that a wide range of opportunities exist for the teaching (and learning) of Citizenship, Community Cohesion and British Values (e.g., through PSHCME program). Students engaging in school in any activities related to the Prevent Agenda will be sanctioned in accordance with the Behaviour for Learning Policy, as well as probable involvement with the Police.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years or earlier if considered necessary.

Appendix A

Equality & Discriminatory Incidents

Guidelines for staff

- Watch out for early signs of discrimination/prejudice in any area names in this policy e.g. racial, homophobic etc. Whilst these might be behaviours symptomatic of other problems, they might be related to Discriminatory problems.
- Listen carefully and record all reported incidents via SIMs (in most cases).
- Offer immediate protection to the young person if necessary e.g. withdrawal from classes or provide a safe haven at social time if necessary until the problem is resolved.
- Inform the appropriate Year Manager who will consult with the Assistant Head Teacher (H. Conway). An investigation will then be initiated.

Whilst the investigation is taking place the Year Manager / Assistant Head Teacher will:

- Protect and support all parties.
- Listen to all parties and take the necessary steps to stop any harassment / abuse.
- Ensure that all parties record their version of events – Who? What? Where? When? Why?
- Inform parents and discuss the situation with them.
- Involve all parties in the discussion about what action is to be taken.
- Record all incidents on SIMs and actions and bring them to the attention of the Head Teacher and Governor with responsibility for discrimination.
- Report details of the incident to the LA in the Annual Return..

LISTEN, RESPOND, RECORD, MONITOR

After the investigation the Assistant Head Teacher / Year Manager will:

- Implement strategies to ensure that the discrimination does not occur again by responding to the needs of all parties.
- Record the incident in the pupil file with copies of all reports.
- Meet with parents of all parties involved to discuss the school's response and how parents may support their child.
- Alert staff, as appropriate, to the incident.
- Monitor the situation – regular meetings to be held with both parties if and as required.

Strategies available to overcome discrimination:

- Counselling – including from Form Tutor / Head of Learning / Year Manager / Safeguarding Team / Counsellor / School Nurse / Local Police.
- Revisiting the issue via PSCHME and assemblies.
- Removal of the person responsible for the discrimination from the environment of the victim.
- Allocation of a Peer Mentor.
- Allocation of an adult mentor – school staff / external agency.
- Possible exclusion / loss of social time for person responsible for the discrimination

School Policy Statement

Introductory notes

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced fully in April 2011 and there is no longer a requirement that schools should draw up and publish equality schemes or policies. However, it is still good practice for a school to make a statement about the principles according to which it assesses the impact on equality of its policies and practices, and according to which it establishes specific objectives.

We must under the general duty of public sector equality duty, in the exercise of our functions, have due regard to the need to:

- ✓ Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- ✓ Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- ✓ Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This will apply to all pupils, staff and others using the facilities. We will give relevant and proportionate consideration to the public sector equality duty.

The protected characteristics for the schools provisions are:

- Disability
- Gender identity
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Age (not applicable to pupils)
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships (not applicable pupils)

Age and marriage and civil partnership are NOT protected characteristics for the schools provisions for pupils.

We will have **due regard** to advancing equality of opportunity including making serious consideration of the need to

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristics that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

We will take into account the six Brown principles of 'due regard'

- **awareness** – all staff know and understand what the law requires
- **timeliness** – implications considered before they are implemented
- **rigour** – open-minded and rigorous analysis, including parent/pupil voice
- **non-delegation** – the PSED cannot be delegated
- **continuous** – ongoing all academic year
- **record-keeping** – keep notes and records of decisions & meetings

We welcome the opportunity to be transparent and accountable. To this end we fulfil the specific duties of the Act by:

- ✓ publishing our equality information
- ✓ publishing our equality objectives

We aim to make the information accessible, easy to read and easy to find.

Legal framework

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise these duties are essential to reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Public Sector Equality Duties 2010.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of

differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face.

*There are some areas where a school with a religious character can make exceptions on some certain prescribed grounds. These are discussed at the end of the document.

Principle 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 towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual, homophobic and transphobic harassment.
- positive attitudes and understanding of those women pregnant or during maternity.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

*There are some areas where a school with a religious character can make exceptions on some certain prescribed grounds. These are discussed at the end of the document.

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

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve all sectors of the school community.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life.

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality.

Principle 9: Objectives

Every four years we formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

The curriculum

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the nine guiding principles.

Ethos and organisation

We ensure the guiding principles apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance *
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development *
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

**These items are discussed further at the end of the policy as there are exceptions for schools with a religious character.*

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties.

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

We take seriously the importance of recording the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with. We also investigate potential patterns and trends of incidents.

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. An identified member of the governing body has a supporting role regarding the implementation of this policy.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- respond to prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- incorporate the principles of this policy into the curriculum
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

All staff and governors are signposted towards a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and aim to comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development around equalities.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in line with the schools disciplinary policy.

Monitoring and evaluation

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

We collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, relevant and appropriate to the profile of the school.