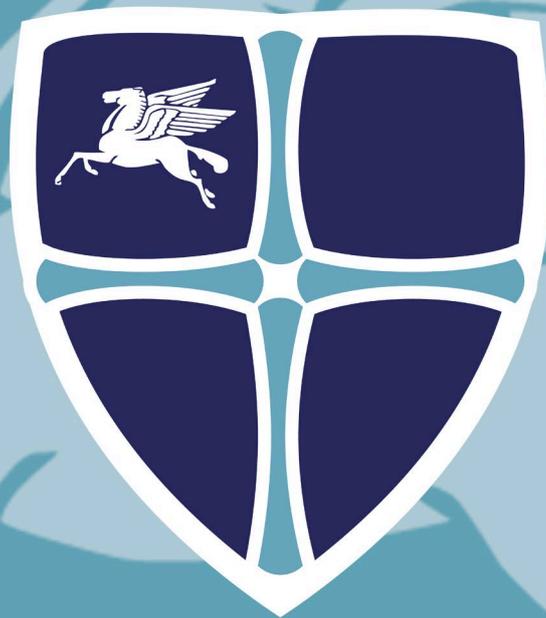


Wellfield School



Equality and Diversity Policy

Chair of Governors – Mrs S Saiger

Headteacher – Ms S Hammond

Updated – December 2022

Review Date – December 2023

EQUALITY

WELLFIELD 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 new Equality Duty has two parts: the “general” duty and “specific” duties.

The general duty is the overarching legal requirement for schools and means they must consider how their policies, practices and day-to-day activities impact on pupils and staff. Schools are required to have “due regard” to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations.

The two specific duties for schools aim to assist them to meet the general duty. Schools should have complied with these two duties from April 6, 2012. They are:

- To publish information to show how they are complying with the Equality Duty. This must be updated at least annually.
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years.

The protected characteristics for the school's provisions are:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships

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 characteristic 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.

Equality Objectives

The Governing Board will:

- ensure that the school complies with equality legislation, and in exercising its functions as a public authority, have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- ensure that the school's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored
- scrutinize the recording and reporting procedures

- follow the LA's admissions policy, which is fair and equitable in its treatment of all groups
- monitor attendance and take appropriate action where necessary
- have equal opportunities in membership of the Governing Body
- provide information in appropriate, accessible formats
- be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy
- be active in recruiting high-quality applicants from under-represented groups
- ensure safer recruitment processes are adhered to when recruiting staff to the school
- have equal opportunities in membership of the Governing Body

The Headteacher will:

- implement the policy and its strategies and procedures
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant continuous professional development
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice
- deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying
- ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the school's equality and diversity policy
- produce a report on progress for the Governing Body
- ensure this policy is developed and effectively implemented with governors, school staff and any relevant external partners
- ensure all staff are aware of this policy and understand their role in its implementation

School staff will:

- be vigilant in all areas of the school for any type of harassment and bullying
- deal effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the subtler forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture
- promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, age and sexual orientation
- promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society
- keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources

Students will:

- refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or any other behaviour that contravenes this policy

- be encouraged to speak out against any discriminatory behaviour that they witness

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 behaviour policy on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. Staff will be made aware of this on initial induction and each time the policy is updated through the Every system.

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. This policy is published on the school website to ensure it is accessible.

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. We utilise the national Online Safety resources for this purpose. If any further information and guidance is required around equalities, the DCC Team can be contacted via email (EqualitiesEducation@durham.gov.uk)

BREACHES OF THE POLICY

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in line with the school's 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.

Signed:

Ms S Hammond

Head Teacher: _____

Chair of Governors: _____

Date approved by the Governing Body: _____

Date of next Review: **December 2023**

**There are a number of exceptions for Schools with a Religious Character including:*

- *Admissions*
- *Benefits, facilities and services*
- *Employment*
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For further information on the Equality Act 2010 and exceptions for schools with religious character please see the document published by the DfE 'Equality Act 2010: Advice for School Leaders

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

The Catholic Education Service document 'Equality Act 2010 – Guidance note for Catholic Schools' also provides specialist guidance for Catholic Schools.

<http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/guidance-for-schools/equality>