



# **Woodbury School**

## **Single Equality**

### **POLICY**

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# Single Equality Policy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Single Equality Policy is part of the School's Single Equality Scheme which will also include a Self Evaluation Framework and resulting actions to be incorporated into the School Development Plan. This Single Equality Policy sets out the School's generic approach to the Single Equality Duty (as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission) to secure equality with regard to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, and religion/ belief. In setting out the School's responses to these duties, this policy also indirectly reflects many of the School's approaches to the promotion of Community Cohesion.

Our school is committed to ensuring that we do not discriminate against anyone, be they adult or child, on the grounds of their race, nationality, disability or special educational need, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion/ belief. This is in line with the 1976 Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act of 2006 and covers both direct and indirect discrimination.

Our over-riding consideration is to:

- celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups
- provide a supportive, inclusive and empowering learning community for all students and adults.

The School recognises that it has to make special efforts to ensure that all potentially vulnerable groups of learners are helped to fulfil their potential, including:

- Boys and girls, men and women
- All minority ethnic groups including Gypsy Roma Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers
- Students and others with special educational needs
- Students and others with a range of disabilities
- Looked After Children and their carers
- Children with poor records of attendance at school
- Young offenders
- Young carers
- Children at risk from significant harm
- Children living with "vulnerable" adults

In our school, regular and systematic monitoring and evaluation of the attainment and achievement of vulnerable groups and individuals will enable us to highlight areas where additional intervention may be needed.

This policy and the process of self evaluation which informs the resultant action plan is the responsibility of:

- The Senior Leadership Team
- The Head Teacher

and its effectiveness is regularly evaluated by

- The Head Teacher
- Horizon Care Strategic Education lead

## **2. THE LEGAL DUTIES**

This document is written with very close reference to three key documents:

“Developing Equality Schemes to meet the three existing duties”: Equalities and Human Rights Commission (2009)

“Developing a Single Equality Policy for you school” : Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education (2010)

It is also written in compliance with the following legal frameworks:

- The Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000)
- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- The Employment Equality Regulations (2003)
- The Equality Act (Part 2) (2006)
- Article 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ratified by UK in 1969)
- Articles 2, 23, 28 and 29 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (ratified by UK in 1991)
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)
- The Disability Discrimination Act (2005)
- The Disability Equality Duty (2006)
- Article 24 of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ratified by UK in 2009)
- The Gender Equality Duty (2007)
- The Sex Discrimination (Gender re-assignment) Regulations (2003)
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003)
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2007)
- Articles 10, 14 of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (ratified by UK in 1986)

This policy is also written with due regard for the Equality Act 2011.

## **3 THE SCHOOL CONTEXT**

a) Significant features of the social, cultural, linguistic, religious, disability diversity of pupils, and staff are as follows :

- *Many of the students will have a Statement of Special Educational Needs for social, emotional, behavioural or other difficulties, including Autistic Spectrum Disorder and ADHD*
- *A significant proportion of students will be Looked After Children*
- *The makeup of staff and students will reflect a diverse range of cultural, social and religious backgrounds*
- *Low income leading to difficulty in participating in some aspects of school life and some poor role modelling in some of our families*
- *A small percentage of our school population will have a race background other than White British. There will possibly be underperformance in terms of academic achievement by pupils from other ethnic groups*
- *Low self esteem, low expectations and peer group pressure among most students on entry to the school.*
- *Low levels of parental support or different parental expectations, except where students are in care, in relation to students with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties*
- *A history of frequent moves and lack of stability for students who are Looked After Children, leading to significant periods of time out of school and/ or poor levels of attendance*
- *Attainment on entry is possibly low and well below average*
- *A small proportion of staff who are child-carers disadvantaged by the timing of meetings and trainings*

b) These features are not representative of the population in the geographical area the school covers in the following ways:

- *The local area is largely white British, living in the city of Wolverhampton, where families predominately are from differing levels of income.*
- *The numbers of families claiming Free School Meals, proportion of young people from ethnic minority groups or with English as an additional language, as well as those with Special Educational Needs are low and well below average locally (OfSTED Reports of the three local schools)*
- *The area is well served by two local primary schools and a secondary school, where most students come from areas of Wolverhampton and from differing levels of income.*
- *Attainment on entry at the nearby secondary school is above average*

c) Reasonable adjustments will be made by our school to ensure that the equal opportunity of pupils and staff is ensured with regard to race, disability or special educational need, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion/belief are as follows

*Recognising that some groups covered in this policy may have particular needs the school:*

- *Is physically accessible to all, including wheelchair users, being all located at ground floor level*
- *Completes an Access Plan to consider changes that would need to be made on the arrival of a pupil or member of staff with a physical disability*
- *Provides support and time for any physical intervention programmes to be completed successfully*
- *Completes specific, targeted training to enable staff to meet the needs of individuals (eg speech and language training – whole school)*
- *Purchases and uses a range of specific equipment to enhance learning and support students (to allow different seating arrangements, foot stools, writing wedges etc)*
- *Provides a range of extra-curricular activities to allow choice and access for all,*
- *Therapeutic services are provided in liaison with the Local Authority and requirements on EHCP plans.*

*Supporting learners with particular needs*

*Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to have particular needs the school:*

- *Supports Key Stage 2 to 4 students through the revision process providing revision booklets and curriculum time for supporting students*
- *Provides a range of specialist rooms and small group teaching (up to 5 students per class)*
- *Supports individual/ families with difficulties over a given period of time (family crisis, behavioural incidents etc) using a mentoring, coaching or counselling approach as appropriate*
- *Strives to identify particular needs as soon as possible to enable early support and/or intervention to take place. The School has a thorough process for assessment upon induction in our Student Support area*
- *Makes provision for 1:1 teaching as appropriate for individual students*
- *Prepares Individual Education Plans to focus on learning priorities*

d) Staff turnover, upward or downward trends in relation to percentage of staff and students from different racial groups, with a learning disability or special educational need, from each gender, or who fall into groups for whom the school needs to give consideration to including age, sexual orientation and religion/belief.

- *Staff turnover will be less than 5% per year; no particular equality group issues emerge from the analysis of joiners and leavers.*
- *Pupil mobility is good and most students remain at the school for part or all of their Post 16 studies*
- *The School will make efforts to tackle and accurately identify the needs of some underachieving pupils as SEN who have undergone the Statutory Assessment process and were deemed to need a Statement of SEN*
- *Boy/girl balance will fluctuate according to referrals and intake over the coming two years.*

e) Attainment and progress of students who would identify themselves (or, in terms of special educational need, be identified) as belonging to different groups according to race, disability or special educational need, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion/ belief is good in the following ways (using the last complete year of whole-school performance data):

- *To reduce the gender gap is in English, Mathematics and Science, across all Key Stages*
- *Students who are Looked After make comparatively equivalent or higher levels of progress and achieve better than most of their peers in Literacy and Mathematics.*

f) Examples of how we seek the views of all our school community, and the wider community, including in relation to equality issues, are as follows:

- *Consultation with parents/ carers about specific aspects (homework, educational visits etc.)*
- *Consultation with students, particularly those on the Student Council, about specific aspects (e.g. policies, uniform) and events*
- *Regular parent/ carer, student and staff forums or reviews where data produced is thoroughly analysed and relevant outcomes fed into our School Improvement Plan*
- *Ongoing "listening" to students via all staff members, together with a visible and accessible Senior Leadership Team and Head Teacher*
- *Consultation with the community through support for and representation at local events*
- *Evaluation of pre-admission comments on placement request forms (annually)*
- *Informal invitations to parents/ carers to share views on aspects such as photographs and uniform*
- *Open tutorial sessions to allow parents/ carers to ask questions, share opinions and concerns and regularly enter into dialogue with the appropriate staff team members:*

Recognising that some of the groups covered in this policy are more likely to find school intimidating, strange or inaccessible our school strives to:

- Explain how the school operates via our School brochure, prospectus and company website
- Translation of key documents when this is appropriate
- Offer a range of ways of communicating between school and parents/ carers that meet parents' circumstances and needs including: daily telephone calls, weekly tutor reports, other written reports, including provision of full Education Reports, morning or evening meetings as appropriate
- Explain how parents/ carers and others can help in school by encouraging their involvement in school life through tutorials, supporting events and review meetings
- Encourage parents/ carers to support their child in homework via home school communication; School newsletters/ magazines, shared reading records and other activities
- Keep parents/ carers informed of school events and student performance, even where we feel they are unlikely to engage.
- Designate a member of staff to deal more personally with families experiencing difficulties or crisis over a period of time, e.g. attending Team Around the Family meetings
- Providing regular IEP Review meetings for parents/ carers and all school staff involved in the learning of children with specific individual needs to come together to report on their progress and plan future targets as a team.
- Encourage an "open door" policy where parents/ carers feel comfortable to come in to chat to teachers or the Senior Leadership Team/ Head Teacher when they have concerns or questions
- Arrange weekly Key Worker/ Tutor meetings for parents/ carers of students feeling vulnerable or experiencing specific barriers to their learning/ wellbeing (often of a temporary nature).

g) Some examples (not a definitive list) of how we seek to address equality issues in our school and improve the access and experience of all equality groups, are as follows:

- Celebrate individual and personal success in a termly celebration, including during tutorial time or group assembly
- Develop global curriculum coverage which celebrates difference, e.g. culture will be being studied globally through the forthcoming events.
- Deliver a whole school curriculum, including PSHCE, which promotes positive attitudes towards minority groups, including partisan views.
- Communicate our Anti-bullying Policy, which encourages and develops empathy, tolerance and understanding and reacts swiftly to unacceptable behaviours against minority groups, recording and monitoring these incidents.
- Offering a wide range of extra-curricular clubs to include sports, Language, Arts and music
- Provide assemblies focusing on specific cultural or religious events, focusing on charity fund-raising, or promoting a positive image of the armed forces or police,
- Offer a Performance opportunity for every child in the school in our twice-yearly concerts. This opens the School's doors for parents/ carers of all students in all year groups to see their children perform
- Ensure that meetings, including SEN, LAC or PEP Reviews are as comfortable and welcoming as possible
- Fund raising for local, national and international charities and ensuring understanding of the purpose and impact of the activity through our School Council and whole school fundraising initiatives
- Encouraging student-led campaigns to appreciate those less fortunate through contributing locally to Harvest Festival and other faith group causes
- **Ensuring a rich and relevant curriculum which celebrates diversity and cultural similarities and differences.** In our development of a rich and flexible curriculum we strive to ensure that the curriculum equips students to actively promote community cohesion and ensures their understanding of faith and ethnic diversity and the common values underpinning society. For example:
  - Through our Humanities teaching, including Religious/Cultural Studies and Citizenship, which explores all the main religions, as well as the achievements and motivations of those inspired by their faith, their sense of moral duty or commitment to active citizenship
  - Through PSHCE and the well-being programme we encourage students to be reflective and empathetic, continually considering the impact of their decisions and behaviours on others and to be aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights
  - Through creative curriculum themes and special curriculum events which allow us to celebrate and explore cultural identity, customs and foods from around the world

## 4 RATIONALE

This Single Equality Policy is not a stand-alone document. Its main function is to present a set of principles which permeate all other school policies and practices. It is closely related to other key school documents, for example:

- Curriculum Policy
- PSHCE Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

As a school, we recognise that there are some core inclusive values that underpin this Equality Policy and ensure respect for all. These are:

- **Fairness:** no school policy or procedure will unfairly advantage or disadvantage any member of our school community
- **Trust:** we begin with the premise that all members of the School community can behave with good intent towards each other
- **Participation:** no member of our School community will be barred in any way from participating in any school activity which could be reasonably expected to be open to all. For those school activities where it would be common practice to be chosen or elected, (i.e. representation at a meeting, on a committee, or on the school council) we will be able to demonstrate that the selection process was fair and transparent (see below)
- **Consultation and negotiation:** Representatives of different stakeholder groups within the School community (i.e. students, staff, parents/ carers) and of all seven identified diversity groups covered by this policy (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion/belief) will be consulted over major policy decisions being taken by the School. The School will make an "equality impact assessment" in relation to any major policy decision. In some situations, where it is reasonable to predict that the ultimate decision will have a significant impact upon the experience in school of different stakeholders, including those within the seven identified groups, the School recognises that it will be appropriate to negotiate, rather than consult.
- **Collaboration:** we will work together as a team in which every member has a view and a voice which is worthy of consideration
- **Transparency:** the reasoning behind decisions made in our school will be open and subject to scrutiny.

We strive to build, within our school, our locality and the partnerships with which we are involved, a strong and cohesive community, which prepares young people for adult life in

- a diverse, inclusive society
- a welcoming community that fosters positive relationships and values diversity as a rich learning resource
- a barrier-free community founded upon a joint sense of belonging.

We strive to nurture in our students and staff the personal qualities which we consider essential in a member of a school community and in a citizen of the wider community and society which values equality and respect for all :

- thoughtfulness
- honesty
- integrity
- caring
- kindness
- responsibility
- humility

**Every member of our school community will be challenged and held to account for upholding the rationale of this Equality Policy.** We recognise that individual members of staff, parents/ carers or students may have different views on a number of equality issues. Our main priority is not to demand that anyone changes their views but that, as a school, we clearly describe what the school considers acceptable/ unacceptable and how everyone is expected to behave in school. No matter what individual people's views might be, our first priority is to ensure that the School complies with every aspect of equality legislation and the duty to promote community cohesion.

## **5. THE SCHOOL'S APPROACH TO PROMOTING EQUALITY FOR ALL**

We work in the following ways to secure equality and respect for all **(these principles apply to all seven equality duties)**

### **a) Current policy and practice in the School shows commitment to meeting the duty to promote race, disability, gender equality for pupils, staff and parents. We address this by:**

- Ensuring that our mission statement, aims and core values relate to every member of our school community.
- Ensuring that we regularly evaluate the impact of all school policies (particularly admissions and attendance, behaviour, collective worship, target-setting, teaching and learning and performance management) on the equality groups as identified in this policy and take action to improve our policy and practice where necessary, through having specific actions on the School Development Plan.
- Ensuring that, wherever possible, the equality groups as identified in this policy are reflected in the language and images of all publications (including the school prospectus, publicity to promote school events, website).
- Ensuring that the school's policy on school uniform makes reasonable allowances for expressions of identity and ease of use for students who are disabled ("reasonable allowances" to be limited by the extent to which adaptation of the school uniform might be used to represent an affiliation to a group or belief which might not be in keeping with the other key principles laid out in this policy.)
- Ensuring that, wherever possible and without artificiality or unbalanced representation, there are positive images of the equality groups as identified in this policy, in school policies, in school publications, in learning resources and in displays.
- Ensuring that the school has clear, commonly understood processes for challenging inappropriate language or behaviour and/or prejudice.
- Ensuring that equality values are represented in the every day language and behaviour evident in school and that senior leaders regularly monitor the school climate in relation to this, in order that tolerance levels in relation to language or behaviour are maintained.
- Ensuring that the School makes the strongest possible efforts to minimise any barrier to the participation and engagement of parents/ carers with regard to their child's development and in other aspects of school life.

### **b) The school can clearly demonstrate how it assesses the impact on equalities of its current policies and practices on race, disability and gender equality for pupils, staff and parents. Our school addresses this by:**

- Ensuring that the school has consistent and reliable procedures for recording and reporting incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour towards the equality groups as identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that the school has monitoring data on attendance, exclusion and bullying and can analyse this with reference to the equality groups identified in this policy.

### **c) The school has secure arrangements for ensuring equality of opportunity with regard to the recruitment, development and retention of employees. We address this by:**

- Ensuring that, whilst adhering to equalities law and fair recruitment practice, every attempt is made to achieve diversity in the workforce, which is representative of that within the school, the local community and the wider community.
- Ensuring that all aspects of employment, including recruitment, disciplinary issues, complaints, allocation of responsibilities, professional development and opportunities for all staff to progress are monitored to ensure that equality is upheld as a central consideration when judgments and decisions are made.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of this Equality policy and wider equality issues through staff training and professional development and that this is an essential element of the induction training for all staff, alongside other key policies.

### **d) The school can demonstrate equality with regard to the educational opportunities available to the students in the specified groups. We address this by:**

- Ensuring that there are opportunities for different viewpoints to be expressed and voices to be heard.
- Ensuring that, where possible and appropriate and without contrivance or artificiality, curriculum themes and content reflect the rights and interests of the equality groups as identified in this policy and promote greater tolerance towards them, across a breadth of curriculum which is wider than planned direct teaching within R.E., PSHE and citizenship (PSHCE).
- Ensuring that the curriculum offers opportunities for all students to learn about the history of inequality and oppression in relation to the equality groups as identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that all the equality groups as identified in this policy have the same opportunity to access educational visits and other School trips as any other pupil in the School.
- Ensuring that all students can participate equally in all aspects of school life, including after school activities.
- Ensuring that School events or activities, including those arising after school, celebrate diversity.

**e) The school can demonstrate equality of opportunity with regard to the achievements of Students in the specified groups. We address this by:**

- Ensuring that the school has processes for monitoring and evaluating the attainment and progress of all students and the comparative attainment and achievement of students in the equality groups identified in this policy. Thereafter ensuring, where there are discrepancies, that appropriate intervention is put into place which will narrow the gap between the attainment and achievement of all students and of those students from the equality groups identified within this policy, where these are lower and need to be addressed.

**f) The school can demonstrate equality with regard to attendance, exclusion and anti-bullying. We address this by:**

- Ensuring we have effective attendance, behaviour and anti-bullying policies which are applied equally to all groups and do not disadvantage any member of our school community.
- Ensuring that the school has processes for avoiding the exclusion of any pupil and that these processes are equally applied to and equally effective for students in the equality groups identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that the school can clearly demonstrate the steps it takes to eliminate harassment and bullying of students or staff in the equality groups identified in this policy.
- Ensuring that the school has monitoring data on attendance, exclusion and bullying and can analyse this with reference to the equality groups identified in this policy.

**g) The School's links with local organisations and community groups represent its commitment to raising the awareness of its students, staff and parents/ carers with regard to the equality groups identified in this policy.**

- Ensuring that the school has links or partnerships with other schools, colleges, local or national groups, charities and organisations which also promote equality.
- Ensuring that the school does not have links, partnerships or connections with local or national groups or organisations which overtly promote prejudice or intolerance or, in the way in which they operate, exclude or disenfranchise members of any of the equality groups identified in this policy.

**h) With specific regard to disability equality:**

- Ensure that the school recognises the "social model" of disability: that a person who has an impairment may become disabled if reasonable adjustments are not provided in relation to that impairment (and is therefore a "disabled person") - over and above the "medical model" – that a person is disabled by physical or mental impairments (and is therefore a "person with disabilities").
- With particular regard to disability: ensure that reasonable adjustments are considered in order to include all disabled young people living within the school's locality.

## **6. MONITORING, REVIEWING AND ASSESSING IMPACT**

- The Single Equality (which incorporates this policy as one of its three elements) will be reviewed on a three year cycle. This takes into consideration the views from the following stakeholders:
  - Students
  - Parents/ Carers
  - Staff
  - Representatives of the local community (which could be community governors if they are representative of the main local equality groups).
- Our school will judge the effectiveness of this Equality Policy by:
  - using the Single Equality Scheme Self Evaluation Framework,
  - by evaluating progress towards equality targets as will be specified on the School Development Plan (and their impact)
  - by canvassing the views of the stakeholders listed above (perhaps through questionnaires or focus groups).
- The stakeholders will contribute to how this is to be evaluated and how the results will be used to improve the policy and its implementation. Evidence of impact will include:
  - Comparative attainment and overall progress of pupils in the equality groups identified in this policy.
  - Students' learning and awareness of equality issues and how they demonstrate these, so they are well prepared for adult life in a diverse and inclusive society.
  - Feedback from parents/ carers, staff and other community users on the culture of equality within the School.



## **7 ACTION PLANNING**

Our school recognises that it is a legal requirement to develop specific targets for each of the equality duties. These will be incorporated but clearly identified in the School Development Plan.

## **8 PREVENTING AND DEALING EFFECTIVELY WITH BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

Our School recognises that the groups covered in this policy may be more vulnerable to bullying and harassment and all acts of reported bullying are acted upon swiftly, recorded and reported to parents (whenever this is identified as advantageous or necessary). They are analysed with a view to monitoring vulnerable groups. Incidents of racism are reported to the Local Authority.

Where the behaviour of a child is cause for concern, an individual behaviour plan or Risk Assessment is created alongside the SENCo, Tutor and parents/ carers. Outside agencies are involved when this is considered advantageous. This ensures progress towards appropriate targets is most effectively managed. Members of the Senior Leadership Team and Tutors act as positive 'behaviour mentors' for students who need more structured support.

Our approach to behaviour management is based on strong relationships built on trust and mutual respect. This helps us to protect the most vulnerable whilst supporting and enabling all students to develop positive behaviour patterns.

## **9. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Head Teacher and Horizon Care will maintain a strategic overview of the currency and efficacy of this Single Equality Policy. Leads for each target on the School Development Plan will be clearly identified. The cycle for review of progress towards the equality targets on all future School Development Plans will be clearly laid out and will follow that for the plan as a whole.