

Woodland Academy Trust

Equality Policy

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Woodland Academy Trust is committed to inclusion, diversity and promoting equal opportunity for all. All schools within the Trust share this commitment, providing an inclusive environment. This objective applies to all policies and procedures and the Trust will at all times adhere to the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and any other associated guidance.

1. Aims

Our school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, all schools have a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality between different groups;
- Foster good relations between different groups; and
- Promote mental health and wellbeing.

Our school's overall values are underpinned by our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. We are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil receives an education that offers them the best chance at fulfilling their potential, and to promoting mental wellbeing amongst our pupils. We have developed this policy to provide a clear framework for how we will achieve our school's aims.

Our school's demographic state is directly linked to our overall aims for achieving equality.

To achieve our aims, we will adopt the following methods:

- Embedding equality within teaching and resources
- Using key data indicators to understand the needs and characteristics of our school
- Promoting community cohesion
- Promoting parental engagement
- Investing in regular staff training
- Using key data, such as measures of wellbeing, to monitor the progress of pupils with protected characteristics
- Regularly reviewing our equality policy to ensure it reflects current trends and issues
- Promoting awareness of intersectionality

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

Human Rights Act 1998

The Equality Act 2010

Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act and schools'

DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children

DfE (2018) 'Gender Separation in mixed schools'

DfE (2014) 'Equality Act 2010: advice for schools'

DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools

This document also complies with our funding agreement and Articles of Association.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Local Academy Committee will:

- Be responsible for ensuring the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure pupils and potential pupils will not be discriminated against, harassed or victimised in relation to:
 - Admissions
 - The way the school provides and education for pupils
 - How pupils are provided with access to benefits, facilities and services
 - The exclusion of a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment
- Ensure all policies are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans in collaboration with the head teacher.

The Head Teacher will:

- Implement this policy, ensuring that all staff and pupils apply its guidelines fairly in all situations.
- Conduct regular training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge.
- Review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.
- Ensure that appropriate counselling is made available for pupils who require immediate interventions, parental assistance and personal counselling.

Staff will:

- Be alert to the possible harassment of pupils, both inside and outside of the school, and to deal with incidents of harassment/discrimination as the highest priority.
- Carry out their statutory duties relating to equal opportunities, inclusivity and pertaining to their specific roles.
- Have due regard to the sensitivities of all pupils, and not provide material that may cause offence. All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in the Equality Objectives statement.

4. Eliminating discrimination

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every September.

The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

5. Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have. In terms of this scheme protected characteristics are:
 - Age
 - Disability-which includes mental health, encompassing prejudiced assumptions, attitudes or behaviours related to mental health.
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Enabling people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. involvement in the full range of school clubs)
- The people covered by the School Equalities Scheme are:
 - Prospective pupils (in relation to admissions arrangements).
 - Pupils at the school (including those absent or temporarily excluded).
 - Former pupils (if there is a continuing relationship based on them having been a pupil at the school).
- The school recognises that under the Equalities Act it is unlawful to discriminate in the following ways:
 - Direct discrimination (including discrimination based on perception or association)
 - Indirect discrimination
 - Discrimination arising from disability
 - Failure to make reasonable adjustments

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing

- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

6. Fostering good relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE and personal development, 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; 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
- Developing links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

7. Equality considerations in decision-making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

8. The curriculum

- We will ensure that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way that prevents discrimination, and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes.
- We will ensure that equality, diversity and tolerance is taught and promoted throughout each subject area.
- We will ensure that the observation of inclusive teaching strategies is a key aspect of the SLT's annual programme of monitoring.
- We will respect the right of parents to withdraw their child from specific lessons.

9. Promoting inclusion

We will promote inclusion and equality at our school through:

- Ensuring that pupils are called by their preferred names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.
- Ensuring, as far as possible, that our governing board and staff reflect the full diversity of our local community.
- Providing an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- Instilling in pupils an awareness of prejudice, giving them confidence that it can, and must, be eradicated.
- Providing a variety of educational and residential visits that expose pupils to a wide range of cultural experiences.
- Ensuring equal access to opportunities, such as extra-curricular activities and the curriculum.
- Taking care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
- Valuing the cultural experiences and contributions of all pupils, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.
- Communicating our policy to parents to gain their understanding, agreement and support for its provision

10. Links with other policies and documents

- Accessibility plan
- SEND Policy
- LAC Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedure