

## Equality Policy

### Why we have developed this Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for West lane Primary School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including Equal opportunities, Racial Equality, Disability Equality and Gender Equality. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, governors, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our policies and practices have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we listen to and involve pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

### Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

In September 2024, the population of our school is made up of the following groups:

	% of school population:
Boys	52%
Girls	48%
Pupil Premium	30%
Minority Ethnic Groups	7%
Special Education Needs/Disability	23%

## Our Overall Aims

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- Promote good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- \* Ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual orientation, age or socioeconomic background.
- \* Provide a curriculum which ensures equality of access to opportunities for all pupils, preparing them for the diversity of life in modern Britain and more widely;
- Routinely using resources that accurately reflect the diversity and multi-culturalism of today's global societies, and ensuring that such resources are without prejudice or discrimination;
- Actively promoting values and attitudes that vehemently challenge any discriminatory behaviour, intolerance or prejudice.

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes<sup>1</sup>.

## Our Approach

West Lane Primary School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning. We are committed to creating inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

## Our Duties

We ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, our values and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, their parents and partner agencies;
- admission procedures to our school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school or school visits
- participation in school sports (including swimming)
- employees' and staff welfare

## **The roles and responsibilities within our school community**

### **Our Head Teacher will:**

- ensure that governors, staff, parents/carers, pupils and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy;
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy;
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy;
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available;
- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information;
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it.

### **Our Governing Body will:**

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality
- support the Head Teacher in implementing any actions necessary;
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy;
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years.

### **Our Senior Leadership Team will:**

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing the Equality Policy;
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy;
- with the Head Teacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues;
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP.

**Our pupils will:**

- be involved in the development of the Equality Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability;
- be expected to act in accordance with the policy;
- be encouraged to actively support the policy.

**Our parents/carers will:**

- have access to the policy through a range of different formats appropriate to their requirements;
- be encouraged to actively support the policy;
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy;
- be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child.

**Our school staff will:**

- be involved in the development of the Equality Policy;
- be fully aware of the policy and how it relates to them;
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the policy;
- identify any queries or training requirements.

How we developed our Policy - Using information

We have used data and other information about our school, and Equality analysis as a measure to determine the effects of a policy, practice or project on different groups. This approach helps us to analyse whether what we are planning potentially has a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). They help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. They help to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

We have taken a step-by-step approach to equality analysis as set out below:

1) Identifying who is responsible for the equality analysis

Equality analysis is an integral part of policy development. We have integrated it into day-to-day policy-making, business planning and other governance and corporate decision-making arrangements. This means that the person who is making the decision or advising the decision-maker about a policy undertakes the equality analysis, with appropriate assistance and support

2) Establishing relevance to equality

We ensure that all of our policies and practices, both current and proposed, have given proper consideration to equality. To begin with, this means checking all of our policies and practices for their relevance to equality issues.

3) Scoping our equality analysis

When we have decided that a policy is relevant to equality, scoping gives us an opportunity to establish basic systems that will be helpful for our equality analysis. Scoping involves looking at how the aims of the policy relate to equality and which aspects have particular importance to equality. It involves looking at which protected groups and which parts of the general equality duty it relates to. It includes looking at what evidence is available for our analysis, what the information gaps are, and establishing which stakeholders can usefully be engaged to support your analysis.

#### 4) Analysing our equality information

Equality analysis is not simply about identifying and removing negative effects or discrimination, but it is also an opportunity to identify ways to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. We bring together all of our equality information in order to make a judgement about what the likely effect of the policy will be on equality, and whether we need to make any changes to the policy.

#### 5) Monitoring and review

Our equality analysis, and any engagement associated with it, helps us to anticipate and address the policy's likely effects on different groups. However, the actual effect of the policy will only be known once it has been introduced. We may find that we need to revise the policy if negative effects do occur. Area demographics can change, leading to different needs, alternative provision can become available or new options to reduce an adverse effect could become apparent. Equality analysis is an ongoing process that does not end once a policy has been agreed or implemented.

#### 6) Decision-making and publication

Equality analysis is an ongoing process which follows the policy development and review cycle. Nevertheless, there is a stage prior to policy adoption where the equality analysis is considered 'complete' in the sense that it is sufficiently robust and detailed to properly inform decision-making. At this stage a senior member of staff signs off the analysis, including how it has been used to inform the policy and support decision-making.

In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways and other people help us to do this. (Parent and pupil surveys, Analyse School Performance incident reporting.

OfSTED inspectors report on equality issues during our inspection. We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, faith, disability and gender. Identified groups are tracked through school regarding academic and personal development.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil/learner voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

### **Our Staff**

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are without disability.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment. We have disabled access to the school building via a ramp; a disabled parking bay; a disabled toilet and an accessible signing- in table in our reception area

Our staff team have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

### **Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying**

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice –based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to fully embrace the diversity that exists in society. We provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities of different cultures and beliefs that exist in society today in order ensure they emerge as tolerant individuals, respectful of all groups.

We record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for those affected and their families. This

includes sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our pupils.

### **Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

This policy was published in January 2020 and reviewed in September 2024, it will be reviewed in 4 years. It will be actively promoted through our school website.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

The Head Teacher will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

### **Equality Objectives**

We have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be monitored regularly and renewed every 4 years.

## Section 3

### EQUALITY OBJECTIVES: 2024-2028

Link to Public Sector Equality Duty	Protected characteristic	Aim:	Objective:	Target group(s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff etc	Action:	Who's responsible?	Dates from and to:	Milestone/ progress:
All aims of duty	All protected characteristics	To increase pupil, staff and governors awareness of legal and human rights and the responsibilities that underpin society	For pupils to understand they have rights, how they can exercise their rights and understand how rights link to responsibilities	All pupils and staff	To disseminate information regarding The Rights of The Child (assemblies, governors' meetings, lessons)	Senior Leadership Team and Governors	Ongoing	
All aims of duty	All protected characteristics	To ensure the participation of pupils/students from minority, marginalised or vulnerable backgrounds in school life	Ensure the diversity of pupils/students involved in the decision-making processes of the school	Minority, marginalised and vulnerable pupils/students	Identify which groups are under-represented in the School Council and/or pupil voice processes within the school, clubs	HT SENDCo	Ongoing	School council to review regularly choices monitored
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Race/ Religion or Belief/ Disability	To ensure the content of school meals and the eating environment meets the needs of all race and faith groups and those with specific health needs	Increased take up of school meals	All those with specific race, faith, cultural and health needs	School Food Policy in place with representation from diverse backgrounds.	School caterers/cook Healthy School Lead	In place	Allergies training, Healthy School award working group

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Sexual Orientation/Race/Gender identity/Disability/Religion or belief	To prevent and respond to all hate incidents and prejudiced based bullying	Students feel safer as reported in safer schools survey as feel incidents will be dealt with.  Increased staff confidence  Accurate reporting rates.	Whole school and specifically BME /LBGTU/SEND pupils/students or those from a Faith background	To review and update existing policies and practice relating to bullying in line with the review cycle or in response to issues Ongoing staff training.  Ensure continuing professional development for staff to develop skills in identifying and challenging prejudice  Assemblies/PSHE	SLT  Anti-bullying lead	Ongoing	Policies updated and Training cycle provided
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation  Fostering good relations	Sexual Orientation	To ensure LGBT pupils are accepted and homophobia is challenged	Reporting rates of LGBT bullying decrease	Whole school and specifically LGBT students	Raise awareness with staff – Stonewall training completed. Assemblies PSHE policy/curriculum	PSHE Coordinator	By September 2026	Training provided by Clennel
Advance equality of opportunity	Disability/ All	To increase social and emotional skills for identified pupils	Improved ability by pupils/students to handle difficult situations	Pupils/students with social and emotional difficulties	Identified member of staff – Family Support Worker Talk it Out boxes and monitoring Nurture Groups North East Counselling Training Identified staff termly	FSW SLT PSHE Coordinator	Ongoing	Nurture Group Monitoring
Advance equality of opportunity	Sex	To promote opportunities for boys and girls to learn more about career opportunities which challenge	Children are aware of different career opportunities	All pupils	Provide activities that allow pupils/students to explore different careers Aspirations as a school driver, aspirations team, work in curriculum – lessons, visits, visitors	All staff	Ongoing –	

		gender stereotyping						
Advance equality of opportunity	Other	To improve the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals	Improved attainment	Children eligible for free school meals	Collate and analyse data relating to attainment by target group  Continue to identify and implement intervention strategies	SLT	Ongoing	Arbor MIS gives immediate data
Fostering good relations	Age	To improve understanding and to challenge stereotyping between young and older people	Increased positive attitudes towards each other	KS2	Visits to local residential home  Choir in the community Links to Winlaton Community centre	Class teachers	Ongoing	Annual choir singing in the residential home
Fostering good relations	All	To promote good relations between people from different backgrounds	Improved understanding of Gateshead's community and the diversity within it  Increased positive attitudes towards disabled people	All classes	Curriculum Drivers linked to school dynamic Curriculum – Communities – Identify opportunities to look at local, national and global communities  Continue work on Inclusion	SLT PSHE Coordinator	Ongoing	

## Appendix A Key legislation

### Equality Act 2010

#### Equality Act 2010

Harmonises and streamlines existing equality legislation into one Single Act.

The Act protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on 'protected characteristics':

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

This relates to:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

The Act also contains positive action provisions which enable schools to take proportionate action to address disadvantage faced by particular pupils. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged pupil group.

The Public Sector Equality Duty commenced in April 2011.

There are exceptions to enable single-sex schools to admit only pupils of one sex and for schools with a religious character to enable them to have admissions criteria which give preference to members of their own religion.

For more information:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/>

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/inclusionandlearnersupport/inclusion/equalityanddiversity/a0064570/the-equality-act-2010>

### **Accessibility planning**

Accessibility planning is a statutory duty and can be incorporated into this policy. Schools must plan for:

- Increasing access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum
- Improving access to the physical environment of schools, and
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people

The first plans were required to be in place by April 2003. Therefore as schools come to review their accessibility plans they should consider building these actions into their Equality policy.

## **Community Cohesion – Education and Inspection Act 2006**

### **General duty**

- To promote community cohesion

### **Specific duties**

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – helping children to learn to understand others, to value diversity while also promoting shared values
- Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level
- Engagement and extended services – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations with different schools and communities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.