

EQUALITY POLICY 2022

Single Equality Policy Mission Statement

Together We aim for all the pupils, parents/carers and staff, to increase their participation within our school. This is achieved through the development of inclusive cultures, policies and practices. We take account of disability, race and gender to create a secure and accepting, community where everyone feels valued.

'Towards' an outstanding school that provides an enriching and creative learning experience for all pupils. We respond to the diversity of need through our commitment to equality: overcoming potential barriers to learning and setting suitable personal targets.

'Success' is expected of every pupil. They should reach their full potential, recognising personal strengths and celebrating the achievement of themselves and others; both within the school and wider community.

1. Introduction:

At Woodcroft, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to our school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life.

Our Guiding Principles:

- To respect the equal human rights of all our pupils and to educate them about equality.
- To respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the school community
- To oppose any form of racism, sexism, disability discrimination, homophobia or any other form
- To value every child's language and cultural background
- To comply with the relevant legislation and implement school plans in relation to race equality, disability, sexuality and gender equality.
- To provide opportunities for every pupil to achieve the highest possible standards in preparation for their life and education.
- To help every pupil develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is positive and yet receptive and respectful towards other identities.
- To develop the knowledge, understandings and skills of all pupils to enable them to participate in a cultural society and make their contribution as global citizens.

School Context

Our school is in the borough of Barnet in North London. The majority of pupils come to this large urban school from the surrounding community. The school has over 450 pupils, aged from 3-11. There are 16 classes (including morning and afternoon nursery sessions) with two classes each year group. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities are well above average, as is the number eligible for free school meals. There is a wide variety of home languages spoken by our pupils, with 55% of the total number of children having a different home language to English. The most popular languages spoken at home, after English, are Somali, Arabic and Portuguese, but over 40 different languages are spoken overall. Many of the EAL pupils arrive at school with little or no English.

2. Equal Opportunities in Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own cultures and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

Equal Opportunities for Staff:

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Woodcroft. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure whenever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups with our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities of all staff;
- Senior leadership team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Equality and the law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2005) and Equality Act (2006).

3. Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare an Equality Plan which includes identifying our race equality goals and how to meet them;
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this policy, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds;
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

Expressions of racism will not be tolerated at Woodcroft School under any circumstances. We will approach equality through our teaching and learning strategies, curriculum content, and relationships between staff and parents. Our school welcomes a racially diverse population and recognises that it enriches the school.

Pupils and staff are encouraged to adopt a respectful awareness of cultures and languages other than their own.

In addition to ensuring we meet these duties we have due regard to the following areas of focus so to promote race equality:

- Support for refugee and traveller families;
- Positive promotion of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds;
- Support for and celebrations of bilingual pupils;
- Induction of EAL pupils (see EAL policy).

4. Disability Equality

Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

According to the DDA, an impairment is to be treated as affecting the person’s ability to carry out activities, only if it affects one or more of the following:

- Manual dexterity
- Mobility
- Physical co-ordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift or carry or otherwise everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of the risk of physical danger

The DDA 2005 has extended the definition of disability as follows:

People with HIV, multiple sclerosis, diabetes and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to day activities.

Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is “clinically well recognised,” although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to –day activities.

Legal Duties

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed a general duty on school requiring them to have due regard to the following duties when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people

- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA 1995
- Eliminating harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encouraging participation by disabled people in public life
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them.
Review and revise this scheme every three years.

We do not interchange the term disabled with the phrase special educational needs although we appreciate some pupils with SEN will have disabilities.

In addition to ensuring we meet the above duties we will:

- Ensure all pupils, irrespective of disability have access to a broad and balance curriculum
- Not discriminate by reason of disability
- Make reasonable adjustments
- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

The Involvement of Disabled pupils, Staff and Parents/Carers

Woodcroft recognises the importance of involving disabled people fully in the development of the Equality Scheme.

When seeking the views of disabled people, we use their preferred means of communication.

We will communicate with, inform and consult all parents including those with a disability by:

Our weekly newsletter

Whole school events

Our website

Annual Reviews of children with an SEN statement

Short questionnaires

Annual parent questionnaire

We will continue to communicate with, inform and involve all staff, including those with a disability on matters through:

Training on the implications of the DDA and providing a clear definition of disability

Discussion of our Disability Equality Scheme, SEN policy and Access Plan
Discussions with the SENCo and other professionals on meeting the needs of individual disabled pupils

Discussions to enable staff with disabilities to discuss their needs

We will continue to communicate with, inform, involve and consult all pupils, including those with a disability on matters through:

The school council

PSHCE lessons and assemblies

Discussions with individual pupils

Circle Time

Discussions with parents/carers about their children with disabilities

Annual Reviews and IEP reviews

5. Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and women and men transgender people.

Under the general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between men and women

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for identifying our gender equality goals and actions and how to meet them;
- Review and revise every three years

The school recognises that girls and women have been, and in many cases are still, discriminated against. We specifically encourage girls to achieve in curriculum areas such as science, information technology and design technology which have in the past been dominated by boys. However, we also recognise that boys can be constrained by gender stereotyping. We actively encourage boys in activities which have traditionally been seen as in the female domain.

Where appropriate, teachers may organise single sex groups to ensure access to the teaching and learning opportunities and to encourage individuals to take on a more positive role with the group.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend the protection against discriminations on the grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The school makes every effort to comply with these regulations and makes clear to all service users and staff that discrimination of people based on their sexual preference is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

We recognise that the children at our school live in many different family situations and we aim to present different perspectives of family life through our curriculum. We will always challenge homophobic language.

6. Community Cohesion

Woodcroft Primary is committed to promoting community cohesion in the following ways:

- Actively engaging with the local community, local businesses and other schools and nurseries in our area. We have links with other local primary and secondary schools, our EIC cluster, other Resource Provision teacher training institutions. We take local secondary students on work experience and have after school childcare provision. We also take an active role in LA events such as Dance and Music Festivals.
- Working with the Safer Neighbourhood Police Team
- Developing a sense of common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- Assessment arrangements enable all pupils to attain at the highest level possible and do not put any group of pupils at a substantial disadvantage;
- Curriculum content contributes to an appreciation of cultural diversity, and challenges prejudice, bias and stereotype;
- The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to learn about and become involved in the life of their communities;
- Behaviour and discipline policies and procedures reflect the commitment to developing mutual respect and acceptance of diversity;
- National and International (Nepal) links are made where pupils are given opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding within a wider community.

7. 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 strategies are implemented.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of the Single Equality Policy and Action Plan
- For ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support
- Taking appropriate action in any cases of harassment and discrimination including racist bullying, homophobic bullying and bullying related to gender and disability.
- Making sure the race, disability and gender equality plans are readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents/carers know about them;
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the plans and how they are working;
- Dealing with reports of serious-incidents

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with racist, homophobic and other serious incidents;
- Being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- Promoting positive attitudes, equal opportunities and good race relations;
- Avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of ethnicity, disability, family background or gender
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination;
- Taking up training and learning opportunities.

8. Tackling Discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated with our school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher, deputy head/headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

9. Consultation and Involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this policy and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents/carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evenings and parent-school forum meetings;
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings/INSET;
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on pupils attitudes to self and school;
- Issues raised in annual reviews or on Individual Education Plans, mentoring or support parents meetings;
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings.

10. Review of progress and impact

The plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender, disability and other vulnerable groups, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.