



Equality Policy

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Introduction

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff and governors to promote equality of opportunity and consider the needs of individuals. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for identified groups of pupils in school, ensuring there is equality of access and celebrating and valuing the heritage and strength within the school community.

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. At Wood Ley Community Primary School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faith, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

In each section, the policy outlines how the school promotes equality and the monitoring procedures in place.

1. Ethos and atmosphere
2. Learning and teaching
3. Pupils' progress and attainment
4. Behaviour discipline and exclusions
5. Attendance
6. Incidents of prejudice related bullying and all forms of bullying
7. Parental involvement
8. Staff recruitment and retention

This may include both formal monitoring and / or more informally, having an awareness and consideration when looking at school practice, development and events.

Promoting Equality: Ethos and Atmosphere

All pupils are entitled to an education which respects and values their identity, individuality and background and which is free from discrimination and harassment. Our school values diversity and promotes respect and understanding. All members of the school community are treated fairly, honestly and with sensitivity. Our aim is to avoid discrimination against any individual or group.

In order to counter prejudice, we believe our pupils should learn about their rights and responsibilities within a diverse, welcoming multicultural society. They need to acquire the knowledge and skills to accept differences of race, culture and religion, to challenge prejudice and injustice and to resolve conflict.

In order to promote this ethos at Wood Ley community Primary School :

- We are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community;
- There should be a feeling of openness and tolerance which welcomes everyone to the school;
- The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect;
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and where possible, reflect diversity across all aspects of equality;
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure access for pupils and visitors (including parents) with disabilities;
- The dress code and it includes and respects the rights of members of the school community to dress in a way that is appropriate for their faith;
- Provision is made to cater for the cultural, moral and spiritual needs of all children through multi-faith based assemblies, classroom based and off site activities;
- Pupils are given an effective voice, for example through the School Council and through pupil perception surveys & annual pupil questionnaires which seek their views;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community.

Monitoring

Although no specific formal monitoring is carried out, parents and pupils complete an annual survey. This provides an opportunity to include questions relating to the school ethos.

Promoting Equality: Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum

We are aware that pupils bring to school different experiences, interests and strengths, which will influence the way in which they learn. We aim to ensure that:

- all pupils can take part in lessons fully and effectively
- all pupils make good progress
- all pupils feel secure and able to contribute
- all pupils know their contributions are valued
- we take account of pupils' specific religious or cultural beliefs relating to the presentation of ideas and experiences.

Teaching and Learning Methodology

All pupils participate in the same curriculum (unless there is a religious reason why their parents have chosen to withdraw them from some lessons). When planning lessons, staff aim to make the lessons relevant, interesting and accessible to all pupils. Although some groups of pupils do not necessarily require the use of specific teaching methods, planning may be adapted if pupils are not making the expected amount of progress. There is specific guidance to further promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of pupils.

Promoting Gender Equality

Boys and girls participate in the same curriculum. We use a range of activities and contexts for work to take account of the interests and concerns of boys and girls. We avoid gender stereotyping when organising pupils into groups, assigning them to activities or arranging access to equipment. Where appropriate with the older children, segregated changing for PE may be used.

Pupils with a Disability or Sensory Impairment

It is important to recognise that not all pupils with disabilities will necessarily have special educational needs. Wherever possible we aim to ensure that pupils with physical disabilities or a sensory impairment can learn alongside their peers. Children are encouraged to make use of familiar aids, strategies and resources that support them to access the curriculum. This may include equipment to support children, e.g. wheelchair, standing frame or hearing aid, or a different approach to learning and communication strategies for children with other disabilities (e.g. children with social and emotional difficulties).

Potential areas of difficulty will be identified and addressed when work is planned. Teachers take into account such areas as time needed to allow satisfactory completion of tasks, practical considerations, specific difficulties, tiredness and loss of concentration.

Pupils Learning English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We are aware that pupils who speak English as an additional language may need wide ranging support. Planning will take account of the pupil's age, their length of time in the UK, their previous school experience and their experience of other languages. Support will be given to enable pupils to participate in all subject areas. The school will seek guidance from the EAL advisory team as appropriate.

Pupils from Ethnic Minorities and Traveller Groups

The high expectations of all pupils will similarly be expected for these children and the school will aim to use resources and role models to promote high aspirations and achievement. When planning lessons, staff are aware of the need to use images, examples and language that are inclusive, appropriate and relevant for pupils from ethnic minority or traveller groups.

Other Vulnerable Groups

We are aware that there are other groups of pupils who may have difficulty learning or making the expected amount of progress, due to their home circumstances. Staff take care to support these children through the use of intervention groups, nurture activities or adapted learning experiences. This includes pupils entitled to free school meals (*as opposed to the universal free school meal offer*), from families in the armed forces, a Child in Need or within the CAF system of care and Looked After children or refugees.

The Curriculum

Curriculum Content

Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality. The curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society where differences are respected. Teaching makes use of opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families in the school. We teach children about basic human rights and use topics and units of work which raise, explore and value issues of similarity and difference; challenge racism, prejudice and discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity and justice. We are working to introduce a global dimension to areas of the curriculum which are relevant to and examine diverse viewpoints and lifestyles, including the influence of religious, social, cultural and economic factors. We use non-stereotyped materials which reflect accurately a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles.

Through RE lessons and assemblies, children learn about a range of faiths. Children are taught about the beliefs and practices of different religions. In singing assembly children learn some Christian songs but they are not asked to participate in other acts of worship. They are taught to respect and value the beliefs of others. Parents may choose to withdraw their children from assemblies, RE or sex education.

Skills

We provide opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively and collaboratively, to listen to each other and discuss different viewpoints in a rational manner. We aim to develop the critical skills of pupils to enable them to detect and challenge examples of bias, prejudice, stereotyping and racism. We also aim to offer strategies for pupils to enable them to deal effectively with racist incidents and counter racial harassment.

Monitoring Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum

In order to monitor the effectiveness of strategies to promote equality in teaching and learning, the progress of individual and groups of pupils is monitored (see section 3 below). If the monitoring reveals that a group of pupils is not making the expected amount of progress then one course of action may be to adapt teaching methods for that group.

If the monitoring of achievement indicates that a particular group of pupils require a different approach, it may be appropriate to modify the curriculum for a group of pupils or prioritise the needs of that group of pupils. E.g. if monitoring shows that girls are making less progress in maths, teachers may deliberately plan lessons that will appeal to girls. Pupil and parent surveys inform the monitoring of the curriculum. Subject leaders review the content of the curriculum as it changes.

Promoting Equality: Pupils' Progress and Attainment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that:

- Adults in the school will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;
- There are high expectations for all learners;
- It is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the school and to use targeted interventions to narrow gaps in achievement;
- It is important to place a high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability;
- A range of teaching methods need to be used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils and that to promote pupil engagement pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.

Monitoring Pupil Progress

- Pupil progress is monitored termly for reading, writing and maths.
- This is used to identify whether individual children as well as particular groups of pupils are making the expected amount of progress.
- The progress of all groups seen as vulnerable groups is highlighted for specific consideration.
- If there is a significant difference between the progress of all pupils compared to the progress of one particular group, reasons are sought and intervention is taken as necessary to try to narrow the gap.

Vulnerable groups monitored are:

- Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Looked After children
- Minority Ethnic including Traveller pupils
- Children who speak English as an additional language (EAL)
- Pupils whose parents are in the Armed Forces
- Pupils who are entitled to Free School Meals (as opposed to the universal free school meal entitlement) PP
- Monitoring may also take place with regards to gender.
- Other groups may be added according to school, local or national policy or trends.

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions

Whilst all pupils are expected to follow the rules, it is acknowledged that some pupils find this difficult for a range of reasons. In order to help all pupils work towards the agreed whole school rules some children have additional support. This may include participating in an intervention group to develop social skills, personal incentive charts and rewards, in-class support, work with outside agencies or other appropriate action.

Monitoring Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions

The school uses the Suffolk County Council system to report exclusions.

Attendance

The school Attendance Policy outlines the expectations of the school and what action is taken if attendance falls below expected levels. The policy is carried out for all pupils. Where pupils have a medical condition that makes it difficult to attend school, the class teacher works with the family to maintain positive relationships and promote opportunities for learning. The school also has a policy for the administration of medicines for pupils to enable them to attend school. Outside agencies may be consulted to support families where children are reluctant to come to school.

Monitoring attendance

Attendance is monitored by the Headteacher in accordance with the support of the Administrative Assistants. The school office keeps a spreadsheet to track all attendance issues. Those pupils falling below 90% attendance are considered for reason/types of absence and previous intervention. Where appropriate, the families of these children are contacted by the Headteacher to discuss any issues and raise awareness of the school's concerns. This may be followed by intervention by the Education Welfare Officer if attendance does not improve.

Promoting Equality: Countering and Challenging Harassment and Bullying

The school Anti Bullying Policy outlines how the school aims to prevent bullying and sanctions that are imposed if bullying is found to have taken place.

- The school counters and challenges all types of discriminatory behaviour and this is made clear to staff, pupils, parents and governors;
- The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with prejudice related bullying incidents.
- A member of staff or other adult in the school community who considers that they are being bullied is encouraged to talk to the Headteacher. Alternatively, they may make a formal complaint in writing to the Headteacher, or the Chair of Governors as appropriate;
- The School Whistle Blowing Policy protects staff who may wish to make a disclosure if they consider that malpractice has taken place;
- Procedures for dealing with racist incidents are listed in this policy

Monitoring Harassment and acts of Bullying

The school reports to Governors and Local authority on an annual basis the number of prejudice related incidents recorded in the school.

Promoting Equality: Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

Wood Ley Community Primary School aims to work in partnership with parents/carers. We:

- Take action to ensure parents/carers from all backgrounds are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school;
- Ensure that there are open and honest channels of communication, e.g. parent forums and an annual parent survey to ensure parents views are captured and acted upon;
- Encourage members of the local community to join in school activities and celebrations;
- Ensure that parents/carers of all newly arrived pupils are made to feel welcome
- Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made in order to provide all parents/carers with access to the building and relevant information.

Monitoring partnership with parents and carers

Although no specific monitoring is carried out, parents are asked to complete an annual questionnaire. This could include a question about partnership with parents. The Headteacher is available to parents who may wish to express a concern.

Promoting Equality: Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised formally ;
- Those involved in recruitment and selection are careful to avoid discrimination and ensure good equality practice through the recruitment and selection process.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is equal for all staff;
- Equalities policy and practice is covered in all staff inductions;
- All supply staff and contractors are expected to abide by the school's equality policy and practice;
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

Monitoring Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

Applicants complete a Suffolk County Council monitoring form as part of their application.

Responsibility for the Policy

In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility for the promotion of equalities.

The Governing Body has responsibility for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community;
- The school's equality policy is maintained and updated regularly
- The actions, procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership has responsibility for:

- In partnership with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Overseeing the implementation of the equality policy and schemes;
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability and sexual harassment and discrimination.

All school staff have responsibility for:

- The implementation of the school equalities policy and schemes;
- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Ensuring they do not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity and culture, disability, sexual orientation or other equality issues;
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school or Local Authority or recognised training provider.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Providing updates on equalities legislation and the school's responsibilities in this regard
- Considering the possible impact and success of school activities, opportunities and policy on members of the school community.

Definitions

Disability

Under the 1995 DDA (part 1 parag 1.1) the definition of disability is:
Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Racism and Racial Harassment - Definitions

Under the Race Relations Act of 1976 schools have a duty to ensure that they eliminate unfair racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good community relations. The definition of a racist incident which the Home Office has advised all agencies to use is that recommended by the Report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry:
A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.
The Report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry also contained the following definitions:

Racism

"Racism, in general terms, consists of conduct or words or practices which advantage or disadvantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. Its more subtle form is as damaging as its overt form."

Institutionalised Racism

"The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amounts to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people."

Examples of Racial Harassment in Schools

Racial harassment can take many forms. Examples could include one or more of the following:

- Physical assault
- Physical threat, intimidation or harassment (including attacks on possessions)
- Ostracism in the classroom, playground and working groups
- Verbal abuse of any kind, including name-calling. Racist name-calling must be seen as more serious than general name-calling.
- Racist jokes (including jokes about other nations or particular groups)
- Racially offensive graffiti
- Wearing of racist badges, T-shirts etc.
- Distribution of racist literature, including jokes, cartoons, drawings etc.

Supporting the Victim(s)

It is likely that a child who has been subjected to racist behaviour will be feeling hurt, vulnerable and in need of reassurance. A caring and sensitive approach to those feelings is very important. Effective action could include:

- Speaking separately to the victim
- Supporting and reassuring the pupil
- Recognising that the pupil may be reluctant to discuss the incident initially but may wish to do so later.
- Explaining what action the school has taken or will be taking to deal with the perpetrator(s)
- Reassuring the pupil and encouraging them to report any future incidents
- Asking if the pupil has experienced such behaviour previously
- Recording the incident correctly (see appendix 1)
- Informing the parent(s) of the incident; explaining what has happened and what action has been taken by the school and reassuring them that the school will take steps to prevent repetition