

<b>Elizabeth Woodville School</b>	
Policy Name:	Equality Policy
Owner:	SENDco
Statutory:	Yes
Date Ratified:	By Governing Body December 2023
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## **Introduction**

### **We believe that:**

- We are all different, and we all have the potential to achieve
- We achieve more when we work together
- We have the right to feel safe and to enjoy our learning

### **Because we share these beliefs, we place high value on the qualities of:**

- Ambition – setting challenging goals to work towards
- Confidence – having belief in our potential to achieve these goals
- Curiosity – demonstrating intellectual enquiry and asking questions
- Leadership – influencing others to make positive changes
- Respect – having due regard for the feelings of others and for the environment

## **Background and legislative drivers**

Over recent years, schools have (in line with other institutions and public bodies) been working towards an improved understanding of the diverse nature of their communities and recognising their role in promoting an understanding of equality for different groups of people. Much of this work is in response to legislation that places an increased duty on schools and other settings, but it also sits within the specific context of a school's role in providing learning and opportunities for all - it is about fairness, rights and justice.

Equality legislation exists to protect people but also to try and advance equality. Inequality still persists in the UK despite 40 years of equality legislation. The recognition of diversity and promotion of inclusive and equality practices will help to overcome this disparity.

The Equality Act 2010 harmonises and streamlines legislation that has come before it. The Act refers to protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex

- Sexual orientation.
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

“Prohibited Conduct” - Acts that are unlawful:

- Direct discrimination – Examples: Less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic.
- Indirect discrimination – Examples: A provision, criterion or practice that puts a person at a particular disadvantage and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Harassment – Examples: Conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It includes harassment by a third party (e.g. customer or contractor) in the employment context.
- Victimisation - Subjecting a person to a detriment because of their involvement with proceedings (a complaint) brought in connection with this Act.
- Discrimination arising from disability - Treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (such as periods of absence from work or medical conditions) and failure to make reasonable adjustments.
- Gender reassignment discrimination – Examples: Not allowing reasonable absence from work for the purpose of gender-reassignment in line with normal provision (such as sick leave).
- Pregnancy/maternity related discrimination – Examples: Unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity. It includes unfavourable treatment of a woman or girl because she is breastfeeding.
- Discrimination by association or perception – Examples: Discriminating against someone because they “look gay”, or because they have a gay brother; discriminating against someone because they care for a disabled relative.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on public bodies including maintained schools and Academies.

This combined **Equality Duty** came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

**Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** and other conduct prohibited by the Act by removing or minimizing disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.

**Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.

**Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Having **due regard** means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as outlined above i.e:

Decision makers in schools must be aware of the duty to have “due regard” when making a decision or taking an action which may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.

Schools should consider equality before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions,

not as an afterthought, and they need to keep it under review on a continuing basis.

The equality duty has to be integrated into the carrying out of the school's functions, and the duty has to be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind – it is not just a question of ticking boxes.

Having due regard to the need to **advance equality of opportunity** involves considering the need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

**Fostering good relations** involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

### **Public Sector Duties**

The Act also introduced specific duties, which are designed to help public authorities to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED is set out on the face of the Act, while the specific duties are set out in secondary legislation.

The Specific Duties require schools to:

- Publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty
- Publish equality objectives every four years (one or more as is proportionate to the organisation).
- Seek to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between people

### **School Context**

EWS Academy is a fully comprehensive community school split between two sites which are 9 miles apart. The School is situated in a relatively prosperous catchment area, compared to national averages, centered around villages on the southern fringe of Northamptonshire. The School is committed to fulfilling the full positive potential of every student.

### **Overall aims of our Equality Policy**

The Governing Body of EWS Academy is committed to promoting equality and diversity in the school, and providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all. This Equality Policy for EWS Academy brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. In the implementation of this policy the Governing Body will:

- ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction promote diversity and equality for all staff and value the contributions made by individuals and groups of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and distinctive backgrounds
- promote and sustain an inclusive and supportive study and work environment which affirms the equal and fair treatment of individuals in fulfilling their potential and does not afford unfair

privilege to any individual or group treat part time staff fairly and equally challenge inequality and less favourable treatment wherever practicable promote greater participation of under-represented groups of staff by encouraging positive action to address inequality promote an environment free of harassment and bullying on any grounds in relation to all staff.

### **Responsibility for Implementation**

The Governing Body has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of the policy. The policy will be reviewed at least every two years, to ensure it remains commensurate with the law and best practice. The Senior Leader with responsibility for equalities issues will oversee the implementation of this policy.

The Senior Leader is responsible for monitoring the implementation of all equal opportunities policies and procedures and reporting on the progress made in achieving equalities targets to the Governing Body. The Headteacher has overall delegated responsibility for co-ordinating the day-to-day operation of the policies and procedures with the senior leadership team.

### **Responsibility and Liability**

All members of staff remain personally responsible for ensuring that they act within the law. The Senior Leadership Team of the School are responsible for ensuring that all staff perform their duties in a lawful manner and that proper training and support is provided accordingly. In certain circumstances the Governing Body could be vicariously liable for actions carried out by staff purportedly in the School's name. Any member of staff may be personally liable if, whilst on School business and despite guidance and training from the School, they behave illegally.

The headteacher will implement the policy and make all staff aware of their responsibilities and provide training as appropriate. They will also ensure that all staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and ensure that all staff and pupils are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents.

All staff will enact this policy, its commitments and procedures.

### **Related Policies**

All School policies and procedures will be reviewed to ensure that they comply with the Equality and Diversity policy. The following directly relevant policies and procedures support the School's implementation process:

- SEN Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Medical Policy
- Accessibility Policy

All related policies, procedures and action plans will be implemented with the co-operation of and in consultation with staff, students and Trades Union representatives.

### **Community Cohesion**

In order to achieve a cohesive community, we need to:

- Promote understanding and engagement between communities.
- Encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community.
- Understand the needs and hopes of all our communities.
- Tackle discrimination and Increase life opportunities for all.
- Ensure teaching and the curriculum explores and addresses issues of diversity.

### **Race Equality**

We aim to:

- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good race relations
- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination

### **Gender Equality**

EWS Academy has due regard for the need to, and works to:

- Eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination
- Eliminate sexual harassment
- Promote gender equality

By unlawful sexual discrimination we mean treating one person less favourably than another on grounds of sex or gender. We understand that this could be done directly but that it could also occur indirectly.

Indirect discrimination means that a particular policy or practice may impact more negatively on one gender than on the other, or may favour one gender to the disadvantage of the other.

By sexual harassment we refer to behaviour or remarks based on a person's sex or gender, perceived to be unpleasant, threatening, offensive or demeaning to the dignity and self-esteem of the recipient or subject. We see such behaviour as also damaging to the perpetrator as explored further in our school's Behaviour and Anti- Bullying policies.

We understand 'sex' to refer to the biological differences between males and females and 'gender' to refer to the wider social roles and responsibilities which structure our lives. By promoting gender equality our intention is to recognise and help overcome those lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage which are based on socially ascribed gender stereotypes and assumptions.

### **Evaluation of Provision**

Set out below are the key criteria that we undertake to use as a school to evaluate our provision and to inform our targets and plans for development.

### **Curriculum and Teaching**

Race equality and ethnic and cultural diversity are promoted, and racism and discrimination challenged, through learning in all areas of the curriculum and through the resources and teaching methods used

Every effort is made to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the mainstream curriculum, by taking account of their individual cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs, and by personalising work appropriately.

Wherever possible, steps are taken to provide experience of diversity through personal encounter with diverse cultures and ethnic backgrounds.

### **Admission, Attendance and Discipline**

The admission process (and selection criteria) is fair and equitable to students from all ethnic groups.

The school monitors pupil attendance by ethnic group and uses the data to develop strategies to address poor attendance - making appropriate allowance for leave of absence for religious observance.

The school's procedures for discipline and behaviour management, including exclusion, are fair and applied equally to all students, irrespective of ethnicity. However, we are sensitive to the fact that responses to situations may vary across different cultural /ethnic /faith backgrounds and take care to bear this in mind.

### **Personal Development, Attainment and Progress**

The school recognises and values many forms of personal and academic achievement, and all students are encouraged and enabled to reach their highest personal standards.

Planned and personalised support is given to address any disparities in progress or achievement that are identified through our ethnic monitoring procedures and analysis of data.

Provision for pastoral care and guidance (including careers guidance) takes account of ethnic and cultural diversity, seeking to promote equality and challenge stereotyping.

### **Attitudes and Environment**

Every care is taken to ensure that all aspects of the communal life, environment and ethos of the school promote equality, celebrate diversity and negate all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

All incidents of racism or racial harassment are dealt with according to published guidance on dealing with racist incidents and collection of data.

### **Parents, Governors and Community Partnership**

All the school's forms of communication with, and involvement of parents and carers are designed to be inclusive and accessible to all community members of all ethnic groups are encouraged to participate in the life of the school, whether as governors or in other capacities, and positive steps are taken to include under-represented groups.

Community access to school premises and facilities is equally available to all ethnic groups.

### **Staff Recruitment and Professional Development**

All procedures for recruitment, selection, promotion and professional development of staff are planned and monitored to ensure equality and avoid conscious or unconscious racial discrimination.

Staff are supported through training and management to develop their effectiveness in dealing with race equality issues.

### **The Roles and Responsibilities within our School Community**

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 All governors, staff,

volunteers, students and their families need to develop an appropriate understanding of, and act in accordance with, the school's Equality Policy.

In addition: the school governors are responsible for ensuring that the School prepares, publishes, implements, reports on and reviews the Equality Policy

The Headteacher works with the SLT to:

- ensure staff, parents/carers, pupils/students 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.
- curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, school journeys and extended school activities take account of the policy
- incidents of sexual/gender bullying or harassment are dealt with according to our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies,
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues

Our governing body will:

- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the headteacher 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 pupils/students will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or any other behaviour that contravenes this policy.

Our parents/carers and visitors will:

- 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.
- Will be aware of and comply with the school's equality duties
- Refrain from engaging in direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour

Our school staff will:

- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements.

## **Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

This policy was published on September 2023.

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.

We will report annually on the policy.

## **Equality Objectives**

Using the views of pupils, parents, staff and community and analysis of the information as outlined above we have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be reviewed every 4 years (see Section 3).

### **Race**

Race hate crimes are centrally recorded and reported upon to the Local Authority. Any such incidents are treated seriously with severe sanctions imposed.

Students' are tracked by groups, including ethnicity. Performance compared to the whole school community is monitored in relation to academic indicators as well as behaviour.

Teaching methods will encourage positive attitudes to racial diversity and equality. Build on previous community cohesion day to promote greater understanding.

### **Disability**

Hate crimes based on disability are centrally recorded and reported upon to the Local Authority. Any such incidents are treated seriously with severe sanctions imposed in response.

We will avoid stereotypical assumptions about students' abilities and aptitudes.

We will take active steps to ensure that disabled parents are encouraged to become involved in the school. Participation will be monitored (eg parents' evenings).