



Weetwood Primary School

Equality and Diversity Policy

Written: July 2019
Next Review: November 2021

Introduction

This policy replaces our Single Equality Statement prepared in 2011 following the 2010 Equalities Act. It explains how we meet our responsibilities under the relevant legislation and how we go further than this as we implement our vision and values. It takes account of the Department for Education's 2014 guidance. It has been informed by policies prepared by other schools.

Legislative context

Like other public bodies schools are required, by the general Public Sector Equality Duty, to have due regard to the need to

- 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
- foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Where schools are concerned, age is a relevant characteristic in considering their role as an employer but not in relation to pupils. The relevant, or protected, characteristics for pupils are: sex, race, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, and pregnancy and maternity.

The Act also puts two specific duties on schools:

- to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and
- to prepare and publish equality objectives.

Weetwood's commitment

Weetwood aims to be an inclusive school, valuing the contribution to school life of each of its members and placing importance on the welfare of individuals. We strive to ensure that every member of the school community is treated with respect and dignity and that diversity is celebrated. Everyone is given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. The school is fully committed to challenging discrimination, actively promoting race equality and community cohesion, and aiming to foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality. This policy is intended to help ensure that Weetwood achieves this aim, so that every member of the school community feels safe, valued, respected and able to fulfil their potential.

Learning diversity is recognised and planned for, and we aim to challenge and overcome any barriers to learning, participation and inclusion so that all school users have equality of opportunity. To achieve this we try to fully involve parents and carers in their children's education and the life of the school.

School is committed to tackling inequalities and promoting inclusion in every aspect of the school's life and work. It sets priorities to address the needs of particular groups, and these form an important part of our School Improvement Plan. More information plans can be found in specific policies relating to Race Equality, Community Cohesion, Induction of Bilingual Children and Children with English as an Additional Language, Racial Harassment, Behaviour, Anti-bullying, Disability Equality, Special Educational Needs. These policies accord with the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 2004;
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000;

- Part IV of Education Act 1996 and Disability Act;
- Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Acts 2002 and 2005;
- SEN code of practice;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Amendment);
- Equalities Act 2010.
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (which sets out our duty to promote community cohesion).

Aims and Objectives

At Weetwood we aim:

- to make our school welcoming to everyone;
- not to discriminate against or victimise, either directly or indirectly, any member of the school community - pupil, staff, parent, carer, governor or visitor - on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender, background or sexual identity;
- to promote the principle of fairness and justice for all, and to urge all members of the school community to take responsibility for upholding this principle;
- to challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur;
- to provide a creative and inclusive curriculum which meets the needs of all our pupils and reflects the diversity, experience and interests of our school community;
- to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school, including out of school and after school activities, such as clubs, residential and trips. We recognise that doing this may sometimes entail treating some pupils differently;
- to constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups and to have high expectations of all children;
- to value each pupil's worth, celebrate the individuality and cultural diversity of the community centred on our school, and show respect for all minority groups;
- to provide opportunities for children to celebrate who they are throughout their time at Weetwood;
- to support and encourage respect for each individual's legitimate point of view, in order to promote positive social attitudes and reduce incidents of prejudice and stereotyping resulting from poor self-image and ignorance;
- to take advantage of opportunities for children to engage with people from a variety of backgrounds, through, for example, contributing to projects with other schools and in the community, and through extended schools activities;
- to broaden children's view of the world in order to enhance their understanding of their own community;
- to ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for every member of staff.

Race Equality

Weetwood does not tolerate any form of racism or racist behaviour. The school's culture and ethos is such that every member of the school has equality of opportunity and is equally valued and respected, irrespective of their heritage or origins.

How do we achieve this?

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination. Should a racist incident occur, it will be dealt with immediately in accordance with school procedures (see policies for Race Equality, Racial Harassment and Behaviour and anti-Bullying);
- promote equality of opportunity for pupils, staff, parents and carers and improve outcomes for all;
- reflect the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups in every aspect of school life and in our communications;
- promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the curriculum, PSHE and school visits and visitors;
- try to reflect the diversity of the school community in the displays of work shown around the school and in our events and extra-curricular activities;
- empower children to become responsible citizens of the world.

Community Cohesion

Weetwood school is committed to meeting its statutory duty to promote community cohesion. In particular, it seeks to ensure that children from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, that they experience and appreciate diversity, that they may develop strong, positive and meaningful relationships with each other and have a sense of belonging within their community. It aims to help all pupils succeed in their school lives, to make links with the wider community and to prepare them to be active and responsible citizens in an increasingly diverse society.

Community cohesion is promoted through all aspects of school life:

- through teaching and learning, PSHE and assemblies, by helping pupils understand others and by promoting discussion and debate about common values and diversity;
- by removing barriers to access and participation in school life and offering equal opportunities for all pupils to fulfil their potential;
- by providing opportunities for children and their families to interact with others from different backgrounds, both within the school community and through projects with other schools and in the community.

The fulfilment of this duty is led by the head teacher, supported by the governing body which ensures that it is carried out and embedded into whole-school practice. Its effectiveness is reviewed regularly.

Disability Non-discrimination

Weetwood is committed to meeting the needs of all disabled school users and fulfils the requirements of the amended Disability Discrimination Act that came into effect in 2005. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled children; details of this can be found in our Disability Equality scheme, but broadly we:

- welcome all applications to join the school, whatever disability a child may have;
- provide an environment that allows disabled children and children with special needs full access to all areas of learning - full access to the curriculum, physical and sensory access to buildings and access when needed to information in alternative formats, for example, other than writing;

- modify teaching and learning as appropriate, for example additional time may be given to complete certain activities, teaching materials may be modified, or alternative activities offered where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment;
- ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school;
- ensure that the school environment properly accommodates disabled users of the school.

Gender Equality

We are committed to ensuring that there is gender equality in every area of school life. The actions we take to achieve this may be found in our Gender Equality Scheme. In addition to aiming to fulfil our general duty to end discrimination and harassment and promote equality in school, we will also meet our specific duty to:

- ensure that no discrimination or harassment occurs for any member of staff undergoing, or having undergone, gender reassignment;
- ensure that no gender-related pay gaps exist amongst staff;
- gather information to assess the impact of this and other policies, and of practices, on both sexes;
- consult employees, school users and other stakeholders to inform our gender equality scheme.

Age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marital/civil partnership status

Weetwood aims to:

- ensure that staff are not discriminated against on the grounds of age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marital/civil partnership status in any of the areas of recruitment, promotion, training and development, dismissal, redundancy, benefits and pay;
- respect individual's rights under the law to protection from direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the above grounds;
- fulfil its duty to consider a request by a member of staff to work beyond compulsory retirement age, and to give staff at least six months notice of their retirement date;
- only consider different treatment of staff on the basis of age if it is 'objectively justifiable';
- ensure that the children of gay or lesbian parents and carers are not treated differently or less favourably;
- ensure that homophobic bullying, harassment or discrimination in school is taken as seriously as any other form of bullying or discrimination;
- fulfil our legal duty to support staff who choose to reveal their sexual identity, and protect the privacy of those who don't.

The Role of Governors

This policy sets out the governing body's commitment to equality and diversity and its role in monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the school's policies in promoting equality of opportunity and non-discrimination.

Governors ensure that the school sets and monitors clear performance indicators for equalities in its strategic planning. These are evaluated and outcomes are reported. To do this the governors

collect, analyse and evaluate a range of school data in order to check that all pupils are making the best possible progress and that no group is underachieving or being discriminated against.

Governors:

- Monitor admissions;
- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school, and monitor the comparative progress of girls and boys;
- consider the outcomes of parents/carers' and pupils' questionnaires;
- assess the representation of different groups within the staff at different grade levels;
- monitor the staff and governor appointment process, applications for and success at recruitment and promotion panels, the take-up of training and development opportunities, leaver rates and the proportion of different groups involved in staff disciplinary or grievance procedures;
- require the head teacher to report to governors on any issues through the Head teacher's Reports;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's behaviour policy, and exclusions should they occur, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated and that the use of rewards and sanctions is fair;
- ensure that the school's race, gender and disability equality schemes have statutory three year reviews;
- review this policy every two years, or earlier if it is considered necessary.

The Role of the Head Teacher

It is the head teacher's role to implement the school's policy on Equality and Diversity, supported by the governing body. The head teacher makes sure that all staff are aware of this policy, and that they apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The head teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training. S/he promotes respect and positive non-discriminatory behaviour in all aspects of school life, such as in assemblies, where respect for other people is a regular theme.

The head teacher considers with due concern all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents and reports them to Education Leeds and the governing body as required. S/he also ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against.

The Role of Class Teachers and Support Staff

Staff receive training in equality and diversity and strive to recognise their own prejudices, doing their best to ensure that all pupils and school users are treated fairly and with respect. No child is knowingly discriminated against.

Staff are mindful of this policy when designing schemes of work, both in choice of topics to study, and in approaches to sensitive issues. For example, history topics include examples of the significant contributions women have made in this country's history and in geography, attempts are made to

counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia, and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

Staff actively draw on the interests of minority groups in relation to ethnicity, language, ability, gender and religion or belief whenever possible. When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.

Staff monitor and review the impact of the school policies for equality on the curriculum and its effectiveness and outcomes.

All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of racism, bullying, harassment, sexism, discrimination or prejudice in any form. All incidents are recorded in the class communication book and head teacher's behaviour book. Serious incidents are drawn to the immediate attention of the head teacher and appropriate action and follow up is ensured.