



WEST RISE JUNIOR SCHOOL

POLICY: Equality Policy

Date of Policy: September 2016

Updated: September 2018

September 2020

Ratified by Governors:

Signed:

Review Date: September 2022

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***At West Rise Junior School we inspire and empower independent and creative learners who will continue to enrich their lives and those of others within a culture of high achievement and mutual respect***

***At West Rise Junior School we aim to identify and support all pupils following guidance laid out in the East Sussex Dyslexia Policy.***

***West Rise Junior School is a Rights Respecting School and puts the articles of the UNICEF Children's Rights Charter at the heart of all school policy.***

***This policy reflects that as a school we recognise that all children have the right to be safe, be educated and learn, be treated fairly, be listened to, a healthy lifestyle, extra support if they need it and a right to join in cultural and artistic activities.***

### **Why we have developed this Equality Policy**

This Equality Policy for West Rise Junior School is a single policy for all protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010. We are committed to developing 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, 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 practice and policies 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 will listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

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

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

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

The themes are reflected in our Equality Objectives.

### **Our vision statement about Equality**

*Our vision statement: At West Rise Junior School we inspire and empower independent and creative learners who will continue to enrich their lives and those of others within a culture of high achievement and mutual respect*

West Rise Junior School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and 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 and to create 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**

Our duties We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process of developing this policy in order to ensure better outcomes for all .

We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately, negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between and within different groups of pupils/students and the wider school community. We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as recognising and accepting our duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (The Prevent Duty 2015) and promote the

fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life including the following:

- preparation for entry to the school
- 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 Theatre in Education (TIE).
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare
- the involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
  - school policies

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

#### Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and review of the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy including communicating with staff parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors about 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 Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the school improvement plan
- 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 Senior Leadership Team will:

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

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

Our parents/carers will:

- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
  - 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

**How we originally developed our Policy and how we aim to review it:**

The original development of the policy has involved our entire school community. We have engaged with them and listened to what they had to say.

Pupils/Student:

We accessed parent and student views by sending out a parent and pupil questionnaire. We have also channelled the view of pupils in building the Friendship and Antibullying Policy through the Pupil Council.

Staff:

Staff received a questionnaire. There was also discussion in SMT meetings, staff meetings and TA meetings which informed the policy.

Governors:

Discussion of policy with Governors.

Parents/Carers:

Our school has a website and FaceBook page through which parents can communicate their views. An individual newsletter will inform parents of our policy and ask for comment.

Minority/marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups:

We have listened to the views of parents/carers including those who have a disability and made adjustments to allow for this.

Our partners in the community:

We will arrange review policy meeting workshops for parents/carers to access. We have also worked with Langney Area Forum.

How we developed our Policy - Using information

We have used data and other information about our school, and Equality Impact assessments (EQIAs) to determine the effects of a policy, practice or project on different groups. EQIAs help 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 carried out EQIAs in the form of discussions and surveys. We used this, rather than an additional paper exercise, to ensure that we are not unfairly discriminating against any group.

The engagement activities we undertook as outlined above told us that we are not discriminating unlawfully and that our current practises are inclusive.

In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect our own data and constantly self evaluate. Our School development plan reflects this.

We also use data from Raise Online, incident reports, behaviour, exclusion reports, parental questionnaires and staff discussion to gather whole school information.

OfSTED inspectors visit us regularly and 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. Our Self Evaluation Form means we are constantly assessing the needs of our pupils and staff and how well we are meeting these needs.

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 a multi agency approach to working with vulnerable groups including the use of CAMHS, SALT, TEALS, the Antibullying Team, School Nurse,

local PCSO's and the EP. We have established good links with these services and with the local community. We welcome visitors into our school and from them aim to learn about equality outside of school. Other links include:

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- Choir links to local Nursing and Residential homes singing at Christmas
- Forest Schools - making use of our marshland as a place for the community
- Cranbrook House - links with older children and senior citizens
- Room 13 and links with the Towner Gallery in Eastbourne
- Representatives from major faiths invited to the school
- Links with local charity Foodbank and associated assemblies

### **Equality for Staff**

West Rise Junior complies fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. 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 not disabled.

We adhere to County policy regarding discrimination and harassment. Staff are encouraged to discuss any grievance or concerns they have with a senior member of staff.

We make efforts to ensure that our diverse work force reflects that of our local community. 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 generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

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

At West Rise 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 will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour. (See Friendship and Antbullying Policy).

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore differences in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying using SIMs. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators.

A key aspect of British Values is that of respect and tolerance. Through our PSHEe and SEAL curriculum (including philosophy sessions) and by adopting a Rights based approach to behaviour across the school, we aim to help foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice - including homophobia - and promote understanding and respect, enabling schools to meet the requirements, and live the intended spirit, of the Equality Act 2010.

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

This policy is reviewed every 2 years.

The policy may be shared;

- via the school website
- in a staff meeting with teachers
- In a governor's meeting
- The pupil council will also have the opportunity to review it

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.

### **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/>

#### 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. A comprehensive Access Resource Pack to support schools with accessibility has been developed by the Development Planning Team at ESCC and sent out to all schools. Schools should contact Darren Guyett (01273 481314) if they require a copy.

#### 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.