

Equality and Inclusion Policy

Summary

The overall objective of this Equality Policy is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities. The principles of this policy apply to all members of the extended school community – students, staff, governors, parents and community members. Partners and contractors are also expected to abide by the policy.

Date adopted **June 2010**

Last Review date: **October 2016**

Review date **Bi-Annually**

THIS POLICY IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) POLICY AND THE DISABILITY POLICY

1. Principles

- “Achievement for all” underpins all of our policies and practice. The school seeks to treat all people with dignity and respect.
- We believe that every individual is of equal value regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, culture, religion, race, disability, aptitude, social or economic background.
- Relevant differences are recognised. Treating people equally and fairly can mean treating them differently. Practices may be differentiated to take account of differences.
- The school will proactively seek to minimise barriers to achievement and reduce disadvantages that people may face.
- Employment practices at our school must be fair and promote equality.
- Every student should be helped to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change, and that is receptive and respectful of other identities.
- Every student should develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need to become responsible citizens in a diverse society.

2. Aims of this policy:

Woodham Academy is committed to promoting equality of opportunity through our legal duty both as an employer and as a provider of education. We will comply with the general and specific duties as outlined in legislation. However, this Equality policy is about more than simply meeting the school’s legal obligations, but is about ensuring that we continue to strive towards genuine equality, in all aspects of school life.

The specific aims of this policy framework are:

- To meet our statutory obligations with regard to the current equalities legislation, specifically the Race Relations Act (1976), Race Relations Amendment Act (2000), the Disability Discrimination Act (1995 and 2005), the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), the Equality Act (2010), Age Discrimination Act (2006), the Employment Equality Regulations (2003) and the Education and Inspections Act (2006).
- To meet our statutory obligations with regard to the new code of practice implemented September 2014.
- To outline the appropriate steps that we take to promote equality, good race relations and community cohesion.
- To outline how the school celebrates diversity within our community.
- To outline the appropriate steps that we take to eliminate discrimination and harassment.
- To provide opportunities for **all** students to achieve the highest possible standards.
- To provide opportunities for **all** students to achieve the best possible qualifications and life skills for the next stage of their life.
- To prepare **all** students to be responsible citizens in today's diverse society.
- To provide opportunities for **all** students to explore and value other cultures.
- To challenge stereotypical viewpoints.
- To create an open ethos in which issues can be discussed by the whole community including staff, students, parents, governors and other key stakeholders.
- To create the framework against which we can monitor and review current practice which then informs future development planning

3. Procedures:

Other relevant policies and documents that may be referred to are:

Healthy School policy (including Sex and Relationship Education, Physical Activity), Curriculum Development policy, Child Protection policy, Anti-bullying policy, Behaviour for Learning policy, Teaching and Learning policy, Pay policy, Recruitment and Selection guidance (Durham LA), Data Protection policy and SEN policy

3.1 Staff

3.1.1 Recruitment, retention, development and promotion of staff

Woodham Academy is committed to fulfilling its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment. The school has adopted the LA guidance for recruitment and selection, in addition to a robust review system to ensure that staff recruitment, selection, retention, professional development and promotion are fair and transparent for all permanent appointments.

Responsibility for the appointment of teaching staff up to the post of Deputy Head or equivalent, has been delegated by Governors to the Headteacher. The school considers it normal and good practice to invite a Governor to interviews for all teaching appointments and expects that a Governor will be present for any appointment to a post with substantial responsibility (e.g. a Head of Department or Head of Learning). The responsibility for the appointment of non-teaching and support staff remains with the Headteacher, however they may choose to delegate the process to the Business Manager.

All permanent posts are advertised. Information packs including job descriptions and person specifications are sent to all applicants.

Applications for teaching staff posts are made using the LA common application form which includes an equal opportunities monitoring form.

3.1.2 Specific responsibilities - Staff with disabilities

Wherever practicable, the school will:

- consider and seek to employ disabled people in jobs suited to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications in line with the Disability Discrimination Act (2005)
- ensure that employees with disabilities are considered for promotion according to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications
- ensure that disabled employees are not disadvantaged when the renewal of fixed term contracts is being considered

Members of staff who become disabled, so far as is practicable, should continue to remain employed by the school at the discretion of the Headteacher and Governing Body, dependant on their ability to carry out the duties of their post. Help from related professional organisations should be sought when considering not only the possible effects of the disability but also other consequential disadvantages, such as loss of status or financial loss.

The school will endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments to enable the employee to continue in post. However, options might include:

- continuing in the same post
- a gradual return to work
- a reduction in hours
- redeployment
- premature retirement on grounds of incapacity
- termination of employment

In cases where a disability is a degenerative, progressive condition that develops over time, careful consideration should be given to the selection of the most appropriate option(s).

Woodham Academy will make reasonable changes to work practices and, where possible, the workplace to enable disabled people to work successfully, including those members of staff who become disabled whilst employed.

The school will ensure that a programme of training is offered to staff to increase their awareness of students with disabilities and inform them of appropriate action to be taken when delivering the curriculum. Teaching assistants will support teaching staff as required to help ensure that disabled students have equal access to the curriculum.

The school building and grounds have been partially adapted for access. An accessibility plan with prioritised actions outlines how the building and grounds of the school will be further adapted or maintained to improve access. The Business Manager maintains responsibility for regularly updating the accessibility plan, and reporting to Governors and the Leadership Group as required. In addition, the Governors and Headteacher will ensure that:

- any future building projects will be considered at the planning stage for accessibility and usability by people with disabilities
- evacuation procedures and escape routes for students and staff with disabilities will be carefully planned and published.

3.1.3 Specific responsibilities – Age, gender, race, ethnicity, marital status

In addition, in line with statutory requirements, the school will:

- Consider and seek to employ people in jobs suited to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications in line with all current legislation – specifically the Race Relations Act (1976), Race Relations Amendment Act (2000), the Disability Discrimination Act (1995 and 2005), the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), the Equality Act (2010), Age Discrimination Act (2006), the Employment Equality Regulations (2003) and the Education and Inspections Act (2006).
- Ensure that employees carry out their duties having due regard to the need to:

Eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment
Promote equality of opportunity between females and males
Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
Promote good relations between people of different racial groups
Avoid all forms of discrimination, direct and indirect, or harassment in employment on the basis of gender, sexual orientation or marital status
Avoid all forms of discrimination or harassment on the grounds of age

3.2 Students

3.2.1 Admissions to the School

Applications to the school will be considered in line with the published admission arrangements for all students (see Admissions policy). An applicant's gender, disability, aptitude, race, ethnicity, religious belief, or socio-economic background will not prevent him / her from being offered a place and integrated into the school as far as is practicable.

3.2.2 Specific responsibilities - Admissions for students with a disability

An applicant's disability will not prevent him/her from being offered a place and integrated into the school unless:

- the content, structure and delivery of the curriculum are such that the student would be unable to fulfil a major part of it without undermining the efficient education of other students
- the school would be unable to provide suitably trained staff or facilities to allow the requirements of the National Curriculum to be met

The school will aim to provide students with a disability with the appropriate support to enable them to be fully integrated.

The school will not treat a student with a disability less favourably than any other student and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the full participation and integration (including extra-curricular opportunities) of disabled students. As far as resources allow, the needs of disabled students will be taken into account in the design, structure and flexibility of teaching methods and delivery. Where a curriculum area is organised in such a way that a disabled student cannot fully participate, alternative provision will be made.

Students with a disability or who become disabled whilst studying at the school will be given appropriate support from staff to enable them to have equal access to the curriculum.

The school recognises that special arrangements may be required to enable students with disabilities, including specific learning difficulties, to exhibit their capabilities and knowledge. Special arrangements will be made to enable such students to perform to the best of their ability by meeting their individual needs. The school will liaise with the relevant Examination Boards in such instances.

Students and parents will be made fully aware of the process for making special arrangements for assessment and examinations by the SENCO in liaison with specific curriculum area managers and the Examinations Officer.

3.2.3 Specific responsibilities – Students with medical needs

Students with medical needs whilst studying at the school will be given appropriate support from staff to enable them to have equal access to the curriculum. Individual needs will be considered and addressed by all curriculum areas in collaboration with the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) and a school Access plan will be drawn up. The SENCO and Designated First Aid Officer will ensure that a Health Care Plan is drawn up and held by the school (as outlined in our Drugs and Alcohol policy). The school is aware that a long-term medical condition that has a substantial and adverse effect on a student's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is recognised as a disability (Disability Discrimination Act 2005). Where a student is unable to attend school, the Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Officer will refer the student to the Education and

Health Needs team as appropriate.

3.2.4 The Curriculum

Woodham Academy is committed to providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that meets the needs of all of its students and prepares them for a future in a diverse society. The curriculum provided is reviewed annually to ensure that it is appropriate, relevant and in line with national and local learning entitlements. Students are taught in pathways which are determined by their cognitive ability. In Key Stage 3, students who are identified as having social and emotional needs are taught in smaller supported groups for the majority of their lessons. The PCC (PSHE, Citizenship and Careers) programme has been developed to ensure that issues relating to equality are addressed in all Year Groups. An annual audit of the cross-curricular provision including specialist days, and assemblies is undertaken to ensure coverage.

3.2.4 Provision for students' physical needs

- All areas of the building are accessible to wheelchair users. Lifts have been installed and lift keys are available from the office. Students collect them before 8.50 am and return them at 3.15 pm. but should the lift breakdown students can talk directly to the office staff by pressing the alarm button in the lift.
- Disabled toilets, shower and changing facilities are situated around the school.
- There is a team of Learning Support Assistants to provide support – including two HLTAs
- The Learning Support Team has the appropriate skills to support students' needs.
- The SENCO ensures that the team has access to appropriate training, advice and support from other professionals where appropriate.
- The whole staff (teaching and non-teaching) must be aware of the needs of students with disabilities and of the particular needs of specific individuals, through the SEN register in SIMS.
- All students are made aware of the needs of students with disabilities and of ways of offering help, but allowing independence. Care is needed not to make allowance for students where none is required.

3.2.5 Extra-curricular provision

Woodham Academy is committed to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to experience and take part in extra-curricular activities. Heads of Department will maintain responsibility for monitoring participation levels of extra-curricular activities for different groups of students and report at least annually through their departmental SEF. An Assistant Headteacher will take responsibility for taking an overview of participation levels of different groups of students and report on findings to the Leadership Group and subsequently Governors. Following the analysis, the LG will propose changes and implement strategies to address any arising issues of inequality, discrimination or exclusion. The Data Manager will support Heads of Department and the Assistant Headteacher in processing the data into the appropriate format where required to allow them to do their analysis. The Learning Centre will then be used to provide support to the identified students.

3.2.6 Attendance and behaviour

The attendance and behaviour of groups of students, including those students with SEN, is monitored regularly by the Director of Student Support through regular meetings with the Heads of Learning. The Director of Student Support will maintain responsibility for generating a termly report to the Headteacher and for making recommendations to the Leadership Group as appropriate.

3.3 Parents, governors and other stakeholders

Parents, governors and other stakeholders, including those external agencies who work with the school, are expected to act in line within the spirit of the policy. The school is committed to ensuring that this equality policy, and the principles it represents, extends to the wider school community. The school includes as part of its accessibility plan a strategy for ensuring that parents, governors and other stakeholders are able to access parents evenings, celebrations, meetings and other events that may be held on school premises. In addition, the school

seeks to engage all groups of parents, including those considered “hard to reach” parents through the increased and improved use of technology (an improved website and electronic communications) and through increased use of parental surveys.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 All staff including those who work for external agencies are responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of any potential bias within their own attitudes and ensure that any prejudice does not manifest in their professional role.
- Discriminatory comments or behaviours are not tolerated. When dealing with student comments or behaviours (either observed or reported), these should be recorded on SIMS and dealt with swiftly in line with the school Behaviour policy. In the case of a racist incident, or a bullying incident, the Director of Student Support should be notified as soon as possible.
- When dealing with staff comments or behaviours that are considered to be discriminatory or prejudiced these should be reported to the Headteacher. Disciplinary action may follow.
- They promote equality of opportunity, celebrate difference and seek to promote understanding and tolerance of different personal and cultural identities.
- They share with relevant professionals any information, observations, concerns or issues relating to students needs.
- They are vigilant in ensuring that the needs of students are met in line with the Child Protection policy and Anti bullying policy.

4.2 **Teachers** are responsible for ensuring that:

- Teaching styles, methods, language, questioning and classroom management includes and engages all students.
- Differentiation and reasonable adjustments are made to teaching and the teaching environment to ensure equality of access for all students.
- Referrals are made to the SENCO as appropriate
- Suitable resources are chosen which motivate and engage different groups of students.
- Opportunities are provided to explore and celebrate differences.
- Stereotypes and stereotypical activities are not reinforced and are effectively challenged.
- They are sensitive to the individual needs of students within their tutor group or teaching groups.
- Discriminatory comments or behaviours are not tolerated. They should be recorded on SIMS and dealt with swiftly in line with the school Behaviour for Learning policy. In the case of a racist incident, the Director of Student Support should be notified as soon as possible.
- They scrutinise the attainment and progress of their own teaching groups on a regular basis, in line with the assessment calendar, and report to their Head of Department
- Contributing to departmental intervention programmes as appropriate

4.3 **Heads of Department and Heads of Learning** are responsible for ensuring that:

- Attainment of all groups of students is monitored and relevant intervention implemented in instances of underachievement.
- All groups of students have access to an appropriate and relevant curriculum which enables them to achieve the best possible qualifications and life skills for the next stage of their life.
- They communicate relevant attainment and personal information about students to teachers and tutors.
- They support teachers and tutors in fulfilling their duties in relation to equal opportunities.
- They support teachers and tutors in the implementation of this policy, the Behaviour for Learning policy and other relevant policies.
- They promote equal opportunities and celebrate diversity through assemblies, tutor time and PCC.

- They ensure equality of access to extra-curricular activities for all groups of students.
- They and their team behave and act in a way that is in line with the spirit of this policy.
- The admissions process is applied fairly and equally. (Heads of Learning).
- Where information about a student with SEN is known prior to admission, the HOL will invite the SENCO to the admission meeting as described in Section 3.2.4.
- The HOI will liaise with the SENCO to ensure that any change in circumstance, or SEN is communicated to all relevant professionals.

4.4 The Leadership Group

The Director of Student Support will:

- Ensure that the admissions procedure is applied fairly and equally to all students.
- Ensure that students are allocated to classes, pathways or tutor groups appropriate to their needs.
- Monitor the behaviour and incident recording system (SIMS) to ensure that incidents are dealt with appropriately and that any patterns of behaviour are addressed through effective intervention for individuals or groups of students.
- Maintain a record of all reported racist incidents.
- Analyse and report annually on behaviour incidences relating to equality issues.

The Business Manager will:

- Ensure that applications to teaching and non-teaching posts are dealt with fairly
- Monitor applications and outcomes to teaching and non-teaching posts through the equal opportunities monitoring form and report to the Headteacher and Governors
- Maintain responsibility for the creation, maintenance and implementation of the Accessibility Plan
- Ensure that non-teaching staff have access to appropriate training as required.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that the curriculum is appropriate and meets the needs of all groups.
- Ensure that the curriculum is audited annually so that students are taught about issues of equality, inequality, prejudice and discrimination.
- Ensure that an analysis of whole school exam results and other data (EPAS / Raise / Use of FFT against internal tracking) monitor and identify any underachieving groups of students and appropriate intervention is implemented as required.
- Ensure that where appropriate, outside agencies are engaged to support the implementation of the equality policy.
- Ensure that teaching staff have access to appropriate training as required.
- Maintain overall day-to-day responsibility for the provision for all students.

The Governing Body will:

- Maintain a collective responsibility for the education and provision for all students including those with disabilities.
- Ensure that the allocation of resources is appropriate to ensure high quality provision for all students.
- Maintain responsibility for monitoring the implementation of all aspects of the policy with particular regard to statutory obligations as outlined in the current equalities legislation.
- Take responsibility for ensuring that developments in legislation are reflected with school policy and practice.
- Attend training sessions on issues relating to equalities when available and relevant.

5. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. Its effectiveness and implementation will be monitored by the Director of Student Support and the Headteacher.

Appendix A

