

Wye Forest Federation

Redbrook Church of England Primary School
St Briavels Parochial Church of England Primary School



Equality Policy and Statement

This policy was agreed by the Full Governing Body on: (and supersedes all previous policies relating to this area)	9.5.2023
Implemented:	9.5.2023
Review date:	1.5.2024
Review date:	1.5.2027

WYE FOREST FEDERATION

EQUALITY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the underpinning principles, objectives and implementation strategies relating to the WFF's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

As part of our inclusive school vision, we seek to ensure that pupils gain:

a sense of their own dignity and a vision of the innate dignity of all humankind. Inclusivity and hospitality should be hallmarks of Church of England schools: every child should be revered and respected as a member of a community where all are known and loved.

Valuing All God's Children (2019)

Our schools are safe and inclusive; we focus on the wellbeing and progress of every child and we are committed to ensuring all members of our community are of equal worth. As part of our vision, we seek to create an environment where all pupils feel welcome and can flourish. The school welcomes pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties, is inclusive of pupils with different faiths and of pupils from diverse backgrounds.

We believe that the Equality Act (2010) provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

As Church of England schools, we also seek to reflect the guidance set out by The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby in his forward to the document quoted above:

Central to Christian theology is the truth that every single one of us is made in the image of God. Every one of us is loved unconditionally by God. We must avoid, at all costs, diminishing the dignity of any individual to a stereotype or a problem. Church of England schools offer a community where everyone is a person known and loved by God, supported to know their intrinsic value.

OFSTED EQUALITY CRITERIA

Schools are judged according to:

How well leaders and governors promote all forms of equality and foster greater understanding of and respect for people of all faiths (and those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics) through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community.

Outstanding grade descriptors specify these expectations:

- *Leaders promote equality of opportunity and diversity exceptionally well, for pupils and staff, so that the ethos and culture of the whole school prevents any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. Leaders, staff and pupils do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour.*

- *Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and managers have created a culture of vigilance where pupils' welfare is actively promoted. Pupils are listened to and feel safe. Staff are trained to identify when a pupil may be at risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation and they report their concerns. 60 Leaders and staff work effectively with external partners to support pupils who are at risk or who are the subject of a multi-agency plan.*

OUR KEY PRINCIPLES

The Wye Forest Federation's approach to equality is based on the following key principles

1. All learners are of equal value. Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, economic background, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to background, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
6. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Wye Forest Federation understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, all schools have a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups.
- Promote mental health and wellbeing.

Our school's overall values are underpinned by our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. We are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil receives an education that offers them the best chance at fulfilling their potential, and to promoting mental wellbeing amongst our pupils. We are committed to supporting and celebrating all pupils' individual identities. We have developed this policy to provide a clear framework for how we will achieve our school's aims.

To achieve our aims, we will adopt the following methods:

- Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion within teaching and resources
- Using key data indicators to understand the needs and characteristics of our school
- Promoting community cohesion
- Promoting parental engagement
- Investing in regular staff training
- Using key data, such as measures of wellbeing, to monitor the progress of pupils with protected characteristics
- Regularly reviewing our policy to ensure it reflects current trends and issues

OUR EQUALITY POLICY OBJECTIVES 2023 - 2027

- 1. Embed the 'No Outsiders' programme through staff training and further development of appropriate resources**
- 2. Actively Monitor the impact of our equality, diversity and inclusion teaching through learner feedback/ pupils surveys**
- 3. Continue to improve attendance and outcomes for the most vulnerable pupils**

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory and good practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act and schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children'
- DfE (2018) 'Gender separation in mixed schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Equality Act 2010: advice for schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

As Church of England schools, the policy has due regard for the guidance on equality in:

- Church of England Education Office (2019) Valuing All God's Children, 2nd Edition
- Church of England Education Office (2023) SIAMS Inspection Evaluation Schedule

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Federation/school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy
- Admissions Policy
- LAC Policy
- Anti-bullying and hate incidents Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Staff will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of their:

- Age
- Sex
- Race.
- Disability, which includes mental health, encompassing prejudiced assumptions, attitudes or behaviours related to mental health
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Staff will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent, with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated. Staff will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic which they are believed to have, even if the belief is mistaken.

As an employer or prospective employer, the federation

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Board will:

- be responsible for ensuring the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- take all reasonable steps to ensure pupils and potential pupils will not be discriminated against, harassed or victimised in relation to:
 - Admissions.
 - The way the school provides and education for pupils.
 - How pupils are provided with access to benefits, facilities and services.
 - The exclusion of a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- ensure that all policies are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans in collaboration with the Headteacher.
- ensure, as far as possible, that our Governing Board and staff reflect the full diversity of our local community.
- Reviewing and updating this policy annually

The Executive Headteacher will:

- implement and champion this policy, ensuring that all staff and pupils apply its guidelines fairly in all situations;
- conduct regular training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge;
- review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures;
- ensure that appropriate support is made available for pupils who require immediate interventions, including, where appropriate: CBT, Drawing and Talking Therapy, ELSA intervention, and Play Therapy;
- ensure all families and children are supported with referrals to the appropriate agencies to access specialist support.

Teaching and Support Staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom;
- act as a role model for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole school community;
- be alert to the possible harassment of pupils, both inside and outside of the school, and deal fairly and professionally with any incidents of harassment, prejudice and/or discrimination as the highest priority;

- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's vision, values and aims, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability;
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils irrespective of race, religion, gender, economic background, disability etc;
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult;
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Visitors

All visitors to the schools, including parents and carers, are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will publish this policy on our website to enable parents to gain their understanding, agreement and support for its provisions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The Wye Forest Federation proactively teaches and promotes equality, inclusion and diversity through:

Commitment to its shared vision and values and ethos

- Providing an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.

Focus on pupils' wellbeing and mental health

- Inclusion is at the heart of the school's work with daily attention to caring and supporting a significant number of vulnerable children with a wide range of needs.
- There are daily mental health check-in and social and emotional learning sessions
- Strategies for listening to children and responding to their needs are embedded
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistants provide targeted wellbeing and mental health support for identified children.
- We aim to ensure that pupils are called by their preferred names, which may be different from their legal names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.

The PSHE programme

- We teach about different kinds of relationships, including same sex relationships, and gender identity because it is important that our children should have an understanding of the full diversity of the world they live in and be prepared for life in modern Britain.

- Pupils understand how bullying affects people and the legal context of people's rights in this country.
- We provide a variety of educational and residential visits that expose pupils to a wide range of cultural experiences.

Religious education and worship

- Pupils learn about different faiths and to respect and value difference.
- In collective worship the importance of inclusivity and dignity and respect for all are explored, as well as other themes and values that play a part in challenging all forms of prejudicial bullying and language.
- There are worship /reflection tables in all classrooms; Worship celebrates difference and encourages respect and dignity.

No Outsiders in Our School

- The programme provides teachers with a curriculum that promotes equality for all sections of the community.
- The resource aims to bring children and parents on board from the start so that children leave primary school happy and excited about living in a community full of difference and diversity, whether that difference is through ethnicity, gender, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or religion.
- The resource includes 5 lesson plans for every primary school year group (EYFS- Y6) based upon a selection of 35 picture books. Issues addressed include gender and gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, disability and age.

The Wider Curriculum

- The school ensures that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way that aims to prevent discrimination and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes.
- Staff ensure that equality, diversity and acceptance are taught and promoted throughout each subject area, for example, through discussion of stereotypes, cultures and difference.
- We provide equal access to opportunities, such as extracurricular activities and the curriculum.
- We aim to take care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
- We value the cultural experiences and contributions of all pupils, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.
- The school respects the right of parents to withdraw their child from sex education.

Admissions

- We ensure that admission arrangements will not unfairly disadvantage a pupil from a particular social or racial group, or with SEND.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability in compliance with the law.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.
- As an employer our Trust strives to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.