

West End Academy



**Equality Policy**

**2024-25**

## School Aims and Values

This statement sets out our commitment to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination and harassment and is in line with our Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy.

At West End Academy we will continuously strive to ensure that everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Each person in our school will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential regardless of their gender, ethnicity, economic circumstances, cultural and religious background, sexuality, disability or special educational needs and ability.

The school works actively to promote equality and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality. We do this by:

- Treating all those within the school community (e.g. pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and the wider community) as individuals with their own particular abilities, beliefs, challenges, attitudes, background and experience.
- Creating and maintaining a school ethos which values and respects all people, which promotes equality, develops understanding and challenges myths, stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices.
- Preparing all pupils for life inside a diverse society
- Encouraging everyone in our school community to gain a positive self-image and high self-esteem.
- Having high expectations of everyone involved with the whole school community.
- Promoting mutual respect and valuing each other's similarities and differences and facing equality issues openly and honestly.
- Fostering good relations amongst both the school community and the wider communities with which we work
- Identifying, challenging and removing all practices, procedures and customs which are discriminatory and replacing them with practices that are fair to all.
- Using all available resources to eliminate barriers which could discourage or limit access to school activities and provision.
- Actively promoting the equality of opportunity.
- Delivering diversity and equality through school policies, practice, and procedures.
- Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing all the above to secure continuous improvement in all that we do.

## **Equality Legislation**

This statement ensures that West End Academy meets the statutory obligations under the equality duties outlined below. The key pieces of equality legislation are:

The Equality Act 2010 (last updated 2015) replaces all existing equality legislation and provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all types of discrimination that are unlawful. The Equality Act extends the prohibition for directly or indirectly discriminating to what are now termed 'protected characteristics'.

These protected characteristics cover:

- Disability
- Gender / Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Ethnicity
- Religion and belief (including lack of belief)
- Sexual Identity
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Age

The Equality Act 2010 states that we should in carrying out our functions and have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful disability discrimination
- Eliminate disability related harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabilities even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others

### **Gender / Gender reassignment**

The Equality Act 2010 places a positive duty on us not to treat anyone unfairly because of gender; this means to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity between girls and boys, men and women. We need to ensure that the needs of both sexes and transgender people are taken into account in our services and employment. The Equality Act amends the Sex Discrimination Act to place a statutory duty on us when carrying out our functions, to have due regard to the need:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment

- To promote equality of opportunity between men and women. This includes references in regard to same-sex marriage and civil partnerships.

## **Ethnicity**

The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 states that we should in carrying out our functions, and have due regard to the need:

- To eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; and
- To promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups

## **Religion and Belief**

The school has responsibilities to promote equal opportunities in employment and vocational training on the grounds of religion and belief through the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003. The Equality Act 2010, extends the provision to service delivery, making it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, services, facilities and public functions. This also includes lack of faith and people of no faith. We will ensure that we follow these regulations.

## **Sexual orientation / identity**

All public bodies have responsibilities to promote equal opportunities in employment and vocational training on the grounds of sexual orientation / sexual identity, through the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003. The Equality Act 2010, extends the provision to service delivery, making it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, services and facilities. We will ensure that we follow these regulations.

## **Pregnancy / Maternity**

The Equality Act 2010 specifically protects women against direct discrimination and victimisation because of the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity.

## **Age**

The school has responsibilities to promote equal opportunities in employment and vocational training on the grounds of age, through the Equality Act and Age Discrimination Regulations. The provisions apply to all age groups. We will ensure that we follow these regulations.

## **Duty to Promote Community Cohesion**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a duty on all maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion. We therefore ensure that all staff are trained in the procedures to follow, if they are alerted to any concerns in regard to hate crimes in relation to ethnicity or cultural and religious differences.

### **Future Legislation**

We will also welcome the contribution of future equalities legislation to provide equal opportunities for everyone.

**Implementation** We will ensure implementation through action in the following areas

**Relationships and ethos** - to foster behaviour based on rights, responsibilities and mutual respect between all members of the school community, to support pupils' personal development and well-being, to address all forms of prejudice related bullying.

**Equity and excellence** - to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level possible, removing barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities and minimising variations in outcomes for different groups.

**Teaching, learning and curriculum** - to teach pupils to understand others, to promote common values and value diversity, to promote awareness of human rights and of the responsibility to uphold and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.

**Engagement and extended services** - to provide a means for children, young people and their families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different communities locally, across the country and internationally.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

This Equality statement links to other specific policies and action plans that the school produces including the School Improvement Plan (SIP). It outlines the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved and connected with the school so that each person knows what is expected of them. Promoting equality and raising the achievement of all pupils is the responsibility of the whole school staff. Introduction to this statement will be included in induction arrangements for all staff new to the school. School induction procedures will highlight duties implied by this statement in the same way as child protection, health and safety and behaviour policies factor.

The **Academy Standards Committee (ASC)** has agreed this statement and will assess and monitor the impact of it annually via a standing item at the ASC meeting in the autumn term. Our ASC committee is responsible for making sure the school complies with all current equality legislation and that this policy and its procedures are followed.

The **Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)** will demonstrate through their personal leadership the importance of the statement. They will ensure that all staff are aware of the statement and understand their role and responsibilities in relation to it. The Headteacher will ensure the policy is readily available and that the ASC, staff, pupils and their parents/carers know about it. The Headteacher will make sure its procedures are followed and that staff are aware of their responsibilities. The Headteacher will take action and report any incidents, harassment and discrimination to the ASC and Waterton Academy Trust (The Trust). The Headteacher will assess and monitor the impact of this statement and will report outcomes to the Academy Standards Committee annually.

**All Staff (Teachers and Non-Teaching Staff)** will familiarise themselves with this statement and be aware of their responsibilities in ensuring that it is implemented. Teachers will be aware of the implications of the statement for their planning, teaching and learning strategies as well as for behavioural issues. All staff will act as role models for pupils through their own actions. They will deal with any reported racist, sexist and homophobic incidents by following school policy (outlined in the anti-bullying policy), as well as recognise and challenge other forms of bias and stereotyping. Staff will promote equality and community relations, avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of nationality, ethnicity, ethnic or national origins, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic circumstances.

**Pupils** will be made aware of how the statement applies to them in an age related appropriate way. They will learn to treat each other with respect and have the confidence to report incidents to adults.

**Parents/Carers** will be encouraged to participate fully and support the school in implementing the equality statement - particularly by reinforcing its ethos at home and through their own behaviours. Parents and carers have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend and engage in the learning and inform staff of any incidents that occur. Parents/Carers will be invited to comment on the statement and will be regularly updated on progress.

### **Breach of the Statement**

We will ensure that all governors (ASC members), staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of our commitment to promoting equality and diversity. All persons covered by the statement will be aware of their responsibility to

report any action which constitutes, or could be deemed to constitute, a breach of the statement in the first instance to the Headteacher and or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). It will be for the Headteacher in consultation with other relevant staff, including Waterton Academy Trust (The Trust), to decide on an appropriate response to any breach of the statement, depending on circumstances and seriousness. This may include amongst other actions:

- Formal or informal warnings (under the School's Behaviour Policy)
- Involvement of ASC members or Trust committee members
- Fixed term or permanent exclusion

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their gender, ethnicity, economic circumstances, cultural and religious background, sexuality, disability or special educational needs and ability.
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's gender, ethnicity, economic circumstances, cultural and religious background, sexuality, disability or special educational needs and ability.
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to cooperate with other people on grounds of gender, ethnicity, economic circumstances, cultural and religious background, sexuality, disability or special educational needs and ability.
- Failure to deal with incidents that occur
- Age related discrimination

### **Monitoring, Assessing and Reviewing the Policy**

To monitor our pupils' attainment we will collect information about pupils' performance and progress, analyse it and use it to examine trends. To help interpret this information we will monitor other areas that could have an adverse impact on pupil's attainment such as monitoring information to help us to ascertain what progress we are making towards meeting our targets and aims. In particular, it will help us to:

- Highlight any difference between pupils
- Challenge why and how these differences exist and test explanations given
- Review the effectiveness of current targets and objectives
- Decide what further action will be necessary to meet particular needs and to improve the performance of pupils (which might include positive action)

- Re-think and set targets in relevant strategic plans
- Take action to make improvements

## **Behaviour Policy**

We have a Behaviour Policy that the whole school community are aware of and are expected to promote and maintain. This should be applied consistently by all staff.

## **Teaching, learning and the curriculum**

We aim to ensure that all learners access a rich, broad and balanced curriculum. Appropriate differentiation offers challenge for more able learners and scaffolding for low attainers. Support is also in place in the form of intervention strategies for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). This is monitored through:

- Regular assessments of pupils' learning and using this information to track pupil progress.
- The use of contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitoring achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Taking account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensuring equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promoting attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Providing opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seeking to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

## **Equal Opportunities for 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 and in compliance with the law. As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. Recruitment procedures, as well as allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or



re-evaluating staff structures, are free from discrimination. Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

### **Assessing the impact of policies**

We will continue to assess the effectiveness of our policies through existing arrangements for developing and reviewing additional school policies. The main question for assessing the impact of all our school's policies (giving special attention to pupils' attainment levels) will include the following:

- Does each relevant policy include aims to promote equality, prevent or challenge discrimination?
- Do we help all our pupils to achieve as much as they can, and get the most from what is on offer, based on their individual needs?
- Which groups of pupils are not achieving as much as they can? Why not?
- How do we explain any differences? Are the explanations justified?
- What are we doing to raise standards and promote equality of opportunity for pupils who seem to be underachieving and who may need extra support?

To answer these questions we will consider the following:

- Collecting and analysing relevant monitoring and other data
- Talking to parents/carers, pupils and staff to find out their needs and opinions

The school raises awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, the school website, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

Further reference should be made to the following:

SEN Policy Inclusion Policy. Health and Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy and Accessibility Plan

Reviewed by C Johnson (Headteacher): September 2024

Next review date: September 2025