



# Equality Policy

Approved by:  
Reviewed:  
Next Review

Governing Body  
March 2022  
March 2025  
(or sooner if regulations/circumstances change)

# Equality Policy

## (including Equality Information and Objectives)

### Introduction

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided School, our approach to issues of equality is informed by the values and beliefs which are intended to shape the activities and attitudes of all who participate in the life of our School.

We respect the integrity of every individual and believe in the inherent worth of each adult and pupil, regardless of background, lifestyle or circumstance. We recognize that each person, through their particular and distinctive experience and insight, has the potential to make a unique and valuable contribution to the success of our School.

We recognise the importance of harnessing a wide range of qualities, abilities, experiences and insights to ensure the continuing healthy development of the School community, in a diverse and increasingly sophisticated world. Within the means available, we are committed to fostering growth, both personal and professional, in pupils, volunteer adults, staff, and governors.

We recognize the importance of justice in our dealings with one another, and believe that no one should be treated unfairly, especially those who, because of background, lifestyle or circumstance might be more vulnerable to mistreatment.

To sustain this ethos, we believe it is essential that all adults, and especially prospective staff, staff and governors, should be aware of, and in sympathy with, the Christian ethos which underpins the School's values and activities, and should be prepared to participate fully in the life of the School.

### Statement of Intent - Pupils

We operate a policy with regard to pupils that seeks to be clear, consistent and fair. Our foundation in matters of equality, is that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

We recognize that pupils vary in age, ability, academic development and personal interests, and the School will seek to be attentive to that diversity, so as to ensure that every pupil is provided with the resources to flourish and that no pupil is knowingly or unwittingly disadvantaged across the range of their learning or participation. We will seek to treat all

pupils fairly, including pupils who achieve beyond assessment expectations in particular areas, or who have not yet achieved the level of progress for which they are aiming, through the provision of appropriate support.

Within the wider life of the School pupils may choose – within the limits of education requirements and good standards of behaviour – to participate, or refrain from participation, in differing aspects of the School's life, including its extra curricular activities, without suffering unfair treatment from other pupils, staff or other adults charged with their education and welfare at Western Downland School..

Whilst it may be necessary to restrict numbers participating in particular activities to ensure operational effectiveness and safety, we will endeavour to ensure that opportunities to participate in the range of School activities are as open and fair as possible.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, including any conduct that has the purpose of violating a pupil's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. We are further opposed to any act of victimisation, harassment or bullying. Such action will be investigated in accordance with the school's procedures, and appropriate action taken, which may, if necessary, include disciplinary proceedings.

### **Statement of Intent - Staff**

We operate a policy with regard to staff and prospective staff that aspires to be clear, consistent and fair. In particular, the School is committed to ensuring that staff appointment, training, development and promotion is determined on merit, giving due consideration to the needs of the School.

All decisions, including advertising of vacancies, short-listing, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion, terms & conditions of employment, dismissal and pay will be based on an objective and fair assessment of the School's requirements. The only personal characteristics, which will be taken into account, will be those necessary for the proper performance of the role in question.

The overriding premise that will be adhered to in matters of equality, by all adults in the school, is that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, including any conduct that has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. We are further opposed to any act of victimisation,

harassment or bullying. Such action will be investigated in accordance with the school's procedures, and appropriate action taken, which may include formal disciplinary action.

Any member of staff who deliberately and knowingly contravenes the policy will be liable to formal disciplinary action.

All staff will have a right, through the agreed procedures, to challenge any decision or action which they believe to be in breach of these principles.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture.

For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Employment Equality Policy.

### **National and Legal Context**

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, gender reassignment, race, sex, maternity and pregnancy, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership (applicable only to staff).

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

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

## School Context

Western Downland Primary School is a split-site rural school – the Infant Site (incorporating the nursery) is situated in the village of Damerham, and the Junior Site in Rockbourne - serving pupils from the rural Western Downland Benefice and nearby villages. The large majority of pupils at the school are White British with a small minority coming from other ethnic groups. It is generally the case that all children speak English as their first language.

**1.1 Our Vision:** Western Downland is a Church of England Foundation Primary School. The Christian understanding which informs and underpins our shared values and activities begins from two simple principles, that everyone who forms part of our School community should be enabled to develop: ‘The Roots to Grow and the Wings to Fly’

**1.2 “The Roots to Grow”:** We begin with a conviction that there is a starting point and foundation for all that nurtures and nourishes a fulfilling life. In Christian language, this might be called the SOURCE or ORIGIN. We seek to provide a secure, nourishing environment which feeds people’s sense of worth, which informs their appreciation of the world around them, and which fires their imagination.

**“The Wings to Fly”:** We believe in providing the opportunity for each person in our School to thrive, to fulfil their potential and even to reach beyond what is - as yet - possible. In the language of Christianity this might be called EXCELLENCE or TRANSCENDENCE. We seek to develop people’s confidence and self-belief, equipping them with skills and encouraging a resilience that enables them to successfully meet challenges, solve problems and overcome setbacks, as well as seeking to foster their understanding of being part of a community, in which we can gain as well as give, through the skills and insights of others. We will introduce them to new experiences and insights which will enrich their self-understanding, and enable them to move forward with a growing sense of who they are and their place in the world.

## 1.3 Our Christian School Values

**Love:** From the early Greek word ‘agape’, found in the Bible, meaning a love which is a true reflection of the love of God: unconditional, self-giving, compassionate, purposeful and transformative

**Fellowship:** From the early Greek word ‘koinonia’, found in the Bible, meaning a readiness to live in community with one another, recognising our interwoven lives and valuing what

each person has to offer, because we are richer as each of us makes our unique contribution to the life of us all.

**Righteousness:** From the early Greek word 'dikalosyne', found in the Bible, which includes a concern to live as well as we can, seeking excellence in our own lives, defending peace, pursuing justice, valuing truth and demonstrating a genuine regard for others, which shows itself in generosity of action.

## Principles

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

### 1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value

We see all pupils, potential pupils, their parents and carers, and staff as of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their sex
- Whatever their gender identity
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age

### 2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or pupils may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

- Disability – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made.
- Sex – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs.
- Gender reassignment – we recognise an individual has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has

undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

- Religion and belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with.
- Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds.
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers.
- Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference.
- Marriage and civil partnership – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have.
- Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth.

### **3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes and interaction between groups and communities different from each other
- an absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics

### **4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff**

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

### **5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist**

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

#### **6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard**

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including pupils who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting pupils, we will take account of views expressed at school council; for parents, through parent governor representation and for staff, through staff governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

#### **7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion**

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum offer foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

#### **8. We base our practices on sound evidence**

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Our current equality information can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement.

*Where schools have less than 150 staff, the Governing Body will not be required to publish information in relation to their staff, and therefore are only required to publish pupil-related data.*

#### **9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives**

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7).

The objectives can be found in Appendix B to this policy statement and take into account both national, county and school level priorities.

We will set ourselves new objectives every four years, but keep them under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

#### **Application of the principles within this policy statement:**

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:



- The delivery of the school curriculum
- The teaching and learning within the school
- Our practice in relation to pupil progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to pupils, their families and staff
- Our policies and practice in relation to pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers
- Our contact with the wider school community

### **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying**

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and pupils are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The headteacher is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons
- support pupils in their class who have additional needs

**Date approved by the Governing Body:** March 2022

**Date for policy review:** March 2025

## Equalities Information

## Appendix A

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief and sexual orientation).

We have also involved staff, pupils, parents and others in the following ways:

- *insert the types of activities you have undertaken, such as:*
- *focus groups*
- *parent questionnaires*
- *involvement of the student council*
- *staff survey*
- *contact with parents representing pupils with particular protected characteristics*
- *contact with the local community and disability organisations*

### Pupil-related data

Information	Evidence and commentary
Composition of the school by gender	42.2% Boys 57.8% Girls
Attendance by gender 2021-2022 (April - July)	95.1% Boys 96.8% Girls

Ethnic Background	White British 94.6% Other backgrounds 5.4%
Special Education Needs	10.8% SEN Support 5.4% EHCP
Free School Meals	7%
Children from a military background	1%
Children in the care of the local authority (CLA)	0.6%
Children with a disability	1.9%

*Care must be taken not to enable the identification of individual pupils or families within the data published. The DfE's non-statutory guidance on the Equality Act advises that schools should consider (but are not obliged by) the DfE position on confidentiality which means that where information relates to fewer than 3 people, it is not generally published.*

### **Staff data**

*Where schools have less than 150 staff, the Governing Body will not be required to publish information in relation to their staff, but they may still choose to do so, provided it does not allow for individuals to be identified. Schools will still require the information on the characteristics of their workforce to enable them to consider the impact of their policies and practices on particular characteristics and to determine whether objectives need to be set in relation to the workforce.*

**Date of publication of this appendix: September 2024**

**Date for review and re-publication: September 2025**

*NOTE: The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require Governing Bodies to publish equality information on an annual basis.*

## **Equality Objectives**

## **Appendix B**

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- *eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act*
- *advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not*
- *foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not*

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, sex, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief and sexual orientation).

We have also involved staff, pupils, parents and others in the following ways:

- *focus groups*
- *parent questionnaires*
- *involvement of the student council*
- *staff survey*
- *contact with parents representing pupils with particular protected characteristics*
- *contact with the local community and disability organisations*

Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objective(s):

Objective 1: To find meaningful and positive opportunities to strengthen the ability of pupils to explore a wide range of issues affecting diversity and to discover a rich global community made up of many different parts.

a) Audit current curriculum (especially in relation to statutory guidance for RSE & Health Education regarding teaching of respectful relationships and behaviours, valuing diversity), our resources and other ways messages about what the school values are demonstrated (e.g. displays, letters, website) to identify strengths and needs for development.

b) Through staff training and discussion, ensure PSHE curriculum, resources and our wider messages, maximise opportunities to ensure the school has fully maximised opportunities to promote tolerance and respect and to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct.

c) Achieve Global Neighbours accreditation (Christian Aid)

#### Objective 2:

To review equality of curriculum opportunity for all pupils, with a particular focus on the curriculum opportunities for our most vulnerable, disadvantaged and those with special educational needs to ensure no pupils are disadvantaged in any way.

**Date of publication: March 2022**

**Date for review and re-publication: March 2025**

## **Governance**