

# **Wymondley JMI School**



# **Equality Policy 2022-2024**

**Version date: March 2022**

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# Wymondley JMI School Equality Policy

## Introduction

Wymondley JMI School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act 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 of different groups.

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.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles:

1. All learners are of equal value. Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, 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 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 school.

## **Purpose of this policy**

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils/staff or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age, marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

## **The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”**

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups;
- Foster good relations between different groups.

## **Two “specific duties”**

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty by April 6th 2012;
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable by April 6th 2012.

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality consideration.

## **Development of the policy**

This policy is part of our commitment to promoting equalities and providing an inclusive school. And will be reviewed annually.

When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010, the Ofsted inspection framework and the new SEND Code of Practice, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our school development plan, school website and newsletters, as well as many

school policies including the school behaviour and SEND policies.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers.

## **What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services;
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers;
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities;
- We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones;
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the school;
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all;
- We put the rights of the child at the heart of all our decision making and put a great emphasis on respecting the views and beliefs of others;
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent: we do not discriminate against prospective pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief.

## **Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance**

The school policy and procedures on behaviour takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over- representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Attendance is monitored weekly and specific groups and individuals are tracked if there is a cause for concern or a pattern emerging.

We challenge all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality. These will be tackled through assemblies, class circle time, as well as in response to specific incidents.

We review incidents termly to observe patterns in any prejudice and would then take action to reduce incidents.

## **What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups**

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements;
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have additional needs;
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate English and Maths skills;
- We collect and analyse data on a termly basis relating to standards reached by different year groups.

This data is shared with staff and anonymised versions at full governing body meetings. We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future pupils.

We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able". We are committed to the concept of growth mindsets. We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils. We provide effective support to pupils at risk of underachieving through the use of our pupil premium budget.

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary. We work hard to make sure everyone has access to extra opportunities through ensuring a range of sporting and arts events with different (or no) selection procedures.

We have an Accessibility Plan designed to increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment and; improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support.

## **What we are doing to foster good relations and community cohesion**

- Fostering positive and constructive relationships in school, in the community and globally, is at the heart of all that we do. From delivering harvest food parcels to the elderly residents in the village to inviting local residents in to watch our whole school productions, we work to include our communities;
- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum and in school life that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils;
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship and across the curriculum;
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local

community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping;

- We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour;
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures through books in our library, through class based sessions and through whole school assemblies.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and promote positive images of people;
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences;
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events.
- We are committed to ensuring that no child is excluded from extra curricular experiences, trips or residential.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we gather feedback through:

- Relevant feedback from Parent Questionnaire, Parents' Evening, parent feedback from all events involving parental involvement throughout the year;
- Responses from staff meetings and training events;
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the Rights Respecting Committee, PSHE lessons and whole school surveys;
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at governing body meetings and from the governing body sub-committee groups, where relevant.

Publishing Equality Objectives - The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

## ***Our Equality Objectives are:***

### ***General***

- *To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through all appropriate curricular and extra-curricular opportunities;*
- *To reduce prejudice and increase understanding of equality through direct teaching across the curriculum;*
- *To move beyond deterministic notions of fixed ability and to model teaching and learning behaviours that develop a growth mindset and avoid labeling;*
- *To promote cultural development and understanding through a rich range of experience, both in and beyond the school;*

- *To eradicate prejudice related bullying in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.*

### ***Specific for the period 2022-2024:***

- **To continue to create a school environment free from sexism, in which boys and girls can learn and live as equals through establishing an organisational framework for tackling sexism.**
- **To train and equip teachers with the knowledge, resources and confidence to tackle sexism.**
- **To support students to learn about sexism, to report incidents and to take action for equality.**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

### **Governing body**

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. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review.

### **Headteacher and Leadership team**

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

### **Teaching and Support Staff**

All teaching and support staff will:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom;
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination;

- Deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, 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;
- 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.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure. We will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting at the start of the school year.

## **Visitors**

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters to enable them to do this.

## **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;
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community;
- As an employer we strive 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;
- Records are kept for each post advertised of the proportion of applicants/short-listed and successful candidates on equalities grounds;

## **Disseminating the policy**

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives and data is available

- On the school website
- As paper copies in the school office



- As part of induction for new staff

We ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy, objectives and data through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

We also publish on the school's website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs.

Signed:        Meghan Brown        Co-Chair of Governors

Tomn Watts        Co-Chair of Governors

Signed:        Alison Joy        Governor with responsibility for Inclusion or Equality

Signed:        Tony Plunkett        Headteacher

Date:        21.03.2022

## **APPENDIX ONE**

### Check list for school staff and governors

- The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training;
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides;
- The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, pupils and other stakeholders;
- The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties;
- The school analyses pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when trends or patterns indicate a need;
- The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives;
- A senior member of staff has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes;
- The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy;
- The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy;
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference;
- All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and the school council;
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern;
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the school community;
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and class assemblies;
- The school environment is increasingly accessible possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school – including the acoustic environment;
- Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered;
- The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information;
- The Governing Body is increasingly representative of the community it serves Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled.