



# EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Approved: 12 March 2024 by the Interim Executive Board  
Next review: March 2025

## Our Vision

In our federation of schools, our Christian vision shapes all we do.  
Jesus said: **“I have come that you may have life in all its fullness”** (John 10:10).  
We make our vision come to life through our school ethos of **Excite, Engage, Include.**

## Equality & Diversity in Employment

### 1. Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is to provide employees with a clear statement about the federation’s commitment to promoting equality and diversity within employment.

We seek to ensure that our working environment is one that respects and includes everyone regardless of their gender or gender reassignment; marital status (including civil partnership); sexual orientation; race, language, ethnic or national origins and nationality (including citizenship); religious belief; disability and / or medical conditions; age; whether they have dependants; trade union membership status and activity or political views/affiliations.

### 2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all employees within the federation, regardless of how long they have been employed, their contractual hours and contract type.

### Definitions

For us “equality” is about opportunity, access, participation and contribution on a fair and equal footing and providing a framework for this to happen.

The term “diversity” acknowledges there are differences between people and the school values and respects the variety of backgrounds, perspectives, values and beliefs of its employees.

### 3. Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the federation to have due regard to the need to:

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

Please click on this link to see Department for Education advice for Schools. [DfE Equality Act 2010 - Guidance for Schools.](#)

### 4. Links to other Policies

The federation’s Single Equality Policy (see page 4) sets out our commitments, values and objectives in relation to equality and diversity. It covers children, parents, staff, carers, governors and other stakeholders.

The WSCC Standards of Conduct sets out the expected standards of behaviour and conduct for all employees. These policies can be accessed via West Sussex Services for Schools.

Our staff conduct policies set out how we expect employees to behave toward one another and outlines the framework for addressing issues that are raised. These are available in the staff handbooks.

## 5. Guiding Principles

We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all by eliminating discrimination. We will do this by ensuring that our practices reflect relevant employment legislation and good practice. Our employment decisions are based upon job related, objective criteria.

We are committed to having a workforce that reflects the diversity within our community where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

## 6. Employee Responsibilities

All employees, irrespective of their role, have a personal responsibility to comply with this policy, associated policies and to abide by the Equality Act 2010, in dealing with each other, managing staff and in their relationships with children, parents, carers, governors and other stakeholders.

In particular, employees, must not:

- discriminate against colleagues, other workers, job applicants, children, parents, carers, governors or other stakeholders;
- bully or harass colleagues, other workers, job applicants, children, parents, carers, governors or other stakeholders;
- encourage or try to encourage another person to treat others unfairly or to practice unlawful discrimination;
- victimise people who have made allegations or complaints of discrimination or who have provided information about such discrimination.

We will not tolerate any of the above behaviours. Where employees commit an act of unjustified or unlawful discrimination, or allow discrimination to occur without taking appropriate action, then they could be liable to a claim being brought against them as an individual, for example at an Employment Tribunal. The employee could also be liable to disciplinary action for a breach of the County Council's Standards of Conduct, which could result in dismissal.

For more detailed information please see the following documents:

- WSCC Standards of Conduct Model Behaviour in the Workplace Policy
- Definitions of bullying, harassment and victimisation
- Types of discrimination

## 7. Employer Commitment

We will carry out the following activities in order to demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity, and also to fulfil our legal responsibilities.

### 7a. Employment Policies

We will ensure that our employment policies, practices and associated guidance are fair to all by undertaking an equality analysis when we carry out employee related projects, policy developments and reviews. All of our policies, associated guidance and procedures are available to view and download from West Sussex Services for Schools.

We will monitor the implementation of these policies to ensure that they remain fair in practice and that any barriers to and within employment are removed.

### 7b. Consultation

We have consultation arrangements with a number of trade unions and professional associations.

### 7c. West Sussex County Council Staff Groups

There are currently six staff groups that recognise and value West Sussex County Council's (WSCC) diverse workforce. All

staff groups meet regularly at different locations across West Sussex to discuss issues that members may be facing. The groups welcome new members all year round. The full list of WSCC Staff Groups is as follows:

**BAME** - this group supports Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic groups, providing a resource of support, safety, innovation, and collaboration for members across WSCC.

**Email:** [BAMEstaffnetwork@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:BAMEstaffnetwork@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Carers** - this group provides support to all carers by working in partnership to change the culture of our organisation, so their needs are acknowledged and acted upon.

**Email:** [CarersStaffGroup@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:CarersStaffGroup@westsussex.gov.uk)

The **Disability Staff Group (DSG)** is a relaxed, informal group of employees dedicated to supporting staff who work for, or with, WSCC who consider themselves to have a disability. It aims to help ensure WSCC is a compassionate and inclusive place to work for people with disabilities.

**Email:** [Disability@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Disability@westsussex.gov.uk)

The **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Staff Group** is a relaxed, informal group of employees dedicated to supporting LGBT staff and ensuring that WSCC is a supportive, inclusive place to work for LGBT people.

**Email:** [WSCCLGBTStaffNetwork@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:WSCCLGBTStaffNetwork@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Mental Health Staff Group (MHSG)** - the aim of this group is to embed a more positive and proactive approach to mental health within our organisation and culture.

**Email:** [MHSG@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:MHSG@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Women in the Workplace** - this group aims to address some of the barriers and issues affecting women, ranging from dealing with inappropriate office banter and building confidence and negotiation skills, through to influencing policy and process to ensure that women do not feel disadvantaged.

**Email:** [women.intheworkplace@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:women.intheworkplace@westsussex.gov.uk)

## 7. Accessibility

If you would like this information in another format, please email

[People.Management.Policy&Practice.Team@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:People.Management.Policy&Practice.Team@westsussex.gov.uk)

### Who can help?

If employees have any questions about equality and diversity issues, they can contact HR Customer Services on 01243 6(42148) or email [hr.customer.services@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:hr.customer.services@westsussex.gov.uk).

Headteachers/ line managers can also get support from HR Customer Services or, for more in- depth questions about diversity and equality issues they can contact HR Professional Support for advice on 033022 22422 or email

[hr.customer.services@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:hr.customer.services@westsussex.gov.uk)

If you need this policy in an alternative format please contact the HR Policy Team on

[HRPolicyQueries@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:HRPolicyQueries@westsussex.gov.uk).

# Single equality policy

## 1. Overview

This policy reflects the Single Equality Act 2010 which harmonises and replaces previous legislation including the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975. This policy therefore supersedes all previous school policies on disability, ethnicity (i.e. race) and gender.

The Single Equality Act combines the existing three duties into one new equality duty that covers all nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. In our schools we will ensure that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of our community, everyone will be treated equally. This single equality policy summarises our approach in ensuring equality for all.

## 2. Objectives

- a. To ensure that all learners have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- b. To advance equality of opportunity by ensuring that teaching, learning and the curriculum promote equality, celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion by fostering good relations.
- c. To eliminate any discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- d. To ensure that no-one is unfairly or illegally disadvantaged as a consequence of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- e. To recognize and celebrate diversity within our community whilst promoting community cohesion.
- f. To ensure that this policy is applied to all we do.
- g. To ensure that pupils and parents are fully involved in the provision made by our schools.
- h. To ensure that within our school budgets, adequate funding is provided to underpin this policy and that intervention, positive and preventative action is funded where necessary.

## 3. Good practice

We strive to achieve a cohesive community and expect that children respect one another and behave with respect to one another, and that their parents feel fully engaged in our schools.

We aim to enhance a wider sense of community locally, as well as in the context of the UK and the World communities. We support 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. Through our policies and actions we undertake to ensure that every child and young person is healthy, safe, is able to enjoy and achieve in their learning experience, and is able to contribute to the wider community.

We meet the local authority's requirement of logging racist incidents and reporting them (To the governing body and the LA) on a termly basis. We monitor and log incidents that discriminate against children and young people or adults in our school with protected characteristics, e.g. homophobic bullying. We also monitor and log bullying incidents, particularly those directed towards those with special educational needs.

## 4. Strategies

Monitoring, evaluation and review carried out by the leadership team will ensure that procedures and practices within our schools reflect the objectives of this policy. Parents and governors will be involved and consulted about the provision being offered by our schools.

Teachers will ensure that the teaching and learning takes account of this policy. The diversity within our school and the wider community will be viewed positively by all. Diversity will be recognised as a positive, rich resource for teaching, learning and the curriculum. Professional development opportunities will be provided for staff to provide them with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to meet the requirements of this policy.

Contributions will be sought from parents and others to enrich teaching, learning and the curriculum. The positive achievements of all pupils will be celebrated and recognised.

## **5. Outcomes**

This policy will play an important part in the educational development of individual pupils. It will ensure that all pupils are treated equally and as favourably as others.

Our schools will make all reasonable adjustments to promote equal opportunity and equal treatment of all members of our school communities. We are committed to meeting the individual needs of each child and will take full account of the protected characteristics in accordance with the requirements of The Single Equality Act 2010.

## **6. Equality objective**

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to publish specific and measurable equality objectives. Our equality objectives are based on our analysis of data and other evidence. Our equality objectives focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantages. We will regularly review the progress we are making to meet our equality objectives.

## **7. Current equality objectives:**

- a. To make our best endeavours to ensure that there is no gender difference in pupil progress.
- b. To ensure that our curriculum and provision effectively supports the needs of all children, with particular reference to disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.
- c. To identify opportunities in our curriculum to look at other ethnicities, cultures and countries, to study famous people from ethnic minorities and with a variety of abilities including disability and celebrate diversity.
- d. Use collective worship as an additional opportunity to learn about festivals from a range of cultures and countries and use international events as an opportunity to explore other cultures and abilities.