



Walkwood

Church of England  Middle School

Equality and Diversity Policy

Governing Body Committee responsible:

Ethos, Inclusion and Care

Approval granted:

3 February 2025

Review date:

Spring Term 2026



Our Vision:

In our inclusive community,
Each valued individual is taught self-belief
We are resilient and optimistic,
Caring for ourselves and our peers.
We are Children of God, with hope,
Awe and wonder in our hearts.

Our Bible verse:

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ
forgave you. *Ephesians 4:32*

Respect - Believe – Succeed

Our values: kindness, friendship, honesty, respect



Introduction



At Walkwood Church of England Middle School we believe that we are all equal before God. We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupil, staff, parents/carers, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion, acceptance and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

1. Introduction

This policy outlines our approach to ensuring equality for all and ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are indeed given equality of opportunity.

A protected characteristic under the Equality Act (2010) cover the groups listed below:

1. age (for employees only),
2. disability,
3. race,
4. sex (including issues of transgender),
5. gender reassignment,
6. maternity and pregnancy,
7. religion and belief,
8. sexual identity,
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

We aim to:

- maintain and promote a working partnership between the school, parents/carers and community;
- help the children understand the world in which they live, have mutual respect for the values of others and work together as a team;
- ensure that everyone, whatever their needs and capabilities, is included and catered for;
- value each individual and recognise and respond to the needs of all children.

2. Legal Duties

The Act also gives schools specific duties to help them to meet the general duty. Under the general duty schools must exercise 'due regard' in respect of each of the protected characteristics (excluding marriage and civil partnership) to:-

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment;
- advance equality of opportunity;



- foster good relations between different groups.

The Equality Act 2010 replaces all previous, separate equality laws including the Disability Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act and others. The Act covers all aspects of school life with how its Children and Young People (C&YP), prospective C&YP, parents, carers and members of the local community are treated.

Equality means treating people fairly, with respect, having regard for rights and wishes. We understand the principal of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion. 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.

In fulfilling our legal obligations, we will:

- Recognise and respect diversity.
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging.
- Observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development.
- Aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers.
- Consult and involve widely.
- Strive to ensure that society will benefit.
- Give due regard to non-statutory advice, including that found in the DfE departmental advice.
- for school leaders on the Equality Act.

3. Putting this Policy into Practice

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice in the following ways:

3.1. Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils.
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps.
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of our school and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without prejudice or stereotype.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of others.
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education.



3.2 Admissions and Suspensions

The admissions arrangements within the school are fair and transparent, without discrimination on race, gender, disability, Special Educational Needs or socio-economic factors.

Suspensions is a measure used in accordance with our Behaviour Pathway expectations. As a school we closely monitor any suspensions to avoid any potential adverse impact on the pupil and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

4. Equal Opportunities for Staff

This part of the policy deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. Walkwood Church of England Middle School is 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 based on merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

4.1 Employer Duties

As an employer, we are committed to ensuring the elimination of discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and to actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects, such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met, can include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention.
- Monitoring bullying and harassment of staff.
- Monitoring the gender pay gap.
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff.
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

All protected characteristics, including age, are covered by the employment provisions of the Act.

Walkwood Church of England Middle School, as the employer, is under the same duty to make reasonable adjustments in relation to disability for its employees, as with Children & Young People (C&YP).

In addition, we may not enquire about the health of an applicant for a job, until the offer of the job has been made, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work. Walkwood Church of England Middle School must comply with both the Health Standards Regulations and Section 60 of the Equality Act.



5. Roles and Responsibilities

We believe as a school that promoting equality is the responsibility of the school as a whole.

Governing Body	Evaluate how well the individual academy is already achieving the three aims of general duty. Monitor the implementation of this Equality Policy.
Headteacher	Promoting key messages to staff, parents/carers and pupils about equality and what is expected. Ensure that the school community receives appropriate training to meet the need of delivering equality, including pupil awareness. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to report and record prejudice related incidents.
Senior Leadership Team	To support the Headteacher as above. Ensure fair treatment and access to services and opportunities. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to report and record prejudice related incidents.
Teaching Staff	Help in delivering the right outcomes for pupils. Design and deliver an inclusive curriculum. Uphold the commitment made by the Headteacher and senior leadership team on how pupils, parents / carers, staff and the wider community can be expected to be treated. Support colleagues within the school. Be aware of the responsibility to report and record prejudice related incidents.
Support Staff	Support the school and Governing Body and in delivering a fair and equitable service to all stakeholders. Uphold the commitment made by the Headteacher on how C&YP, parents / carers, staff and the wider community can be expected to be treated. Support colleagues within the academy. Be aware of the responsibility to report and record prejudice related incidents.
Parents	Take an active part in identifying barriers for the academy community and in informing the Local Governing Body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these. Take an active role in supporting and challenging the academy to achieve the commitment made in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.



Pupils	Supporting the school to achieve the commitment made to tackling inequality.
Local Community	Take an active part in identifying barriers for the academy community and in informing the Governing Body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these. Take an active role in supporting and challenging the academy to achieve the commitment made in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.

6. Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

Walkwood Church of England Middle School is opposed to all forms of prejudice, and we recognise that pupils who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fair less well in the education system. The Whistleblowing Policy provides guidance on reporting concerns that may arise and this includes acts of prejudice towards any pupil, student or member of staff. If incidents occur, we address them immediately, record and report them appropriately.

7. Tackling Discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying should be addressed by the member of staff present, escalating to the class teacher / Headteacher where necessary. All incidents should be immediately reported to the Headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis through Headteacher report.

7.1 What is a Discriminatory Incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socioeconomic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

7.2. Types of Discriminatory Incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- 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 race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- 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 co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

7.3. Responding to and Reporting Incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

The governing body expects all members of the school community to be committed to this policy, and that visitors will comply with it. It accepts responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented in every aspect of school life. If there is a breach of the policy, the school will take appropriate action. This may include the following.

In the case of pupils breaching the policy:

- staff dealing with the incident will complete an incident report form
- the perpetrator will be dealt with in accordance with the Behaviour Policy
- the consequences of any further breach of conduct will be clearly stated with the ultimate sanction of a suspension.

In the case of staff breaching the policy the relevant procedures outlined in the 'Staff discipline, conduct and grievance Policy' will be instigated.

In the case of parents/carers, visitors or contractors breaching the policy they will be reminded of the school's commitment to equality and asked to desist, and further incidents may lead to individuals being requested to leave school premises.

Serious breaches constitute criminal offences and will be reported to the relevant authorities.

Complaints

Where a complaint is related to equality/diversity issues, the school procedure for dealing with complaints will apply. This procedure is available through the [school website](#).



APPENDIX 1 – DEFINITIONS

Direct discrimination – occurs when a person treat another person differently than they would treat another person because of a “protected characteristic”.

Indirect discrimination – can occur when a school applies a “provision, criterion or practice” e.g. what is felt to be a general policy or practice (which puts C&YP sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

Harassment – the legal definition within the Act is “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”.

Victimisation – occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they would otherwise have been because of something they have done (“a protected act”) in connection with the Act.

Protected Act – might involve making an allegation of discrimination, or bringing a case under the Act, or supporting another person’s complaint. The person is protected against retaliation, unless they were acting in bad faith.

Protected Characteristics - people from the groups listed below are known to experience discrimination more often that other people in society. They are now protected in law from being treated unfairly:

- Age - in relation to employment, but not in relation to C&YP
- Disability – a person who has physical or mental impairment which affects their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- Race – a group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins.
- Sex – male or female, including issues of transgender
- Gender reassignment – the process of changing from one gender to another.
- Maternity and pregnancy – being pregnant or expecting a baby; maternity refers to the period after the birth.
- Religion and belief – belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief.
- Sexual orientation – whether a person’s sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex, or both sexes.
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees only)

Curriculum – the content of the curriculum is explicitly excluded from discrimination law, but the delivery of the curriculum is explicitly included.