

WOODHOUSE ACADEMY

EQUALITY POLICY

REVIEWED: Autumn 2016
REVIEW DATE: Autumn 2018

PRINCIPLES

This policy seeks to ensure that all individuals, both staff and pupils, with Woodhouse Academy are encouraged to fulfil their potential and thereby enhance the overall life and culture of the school community.

Whilst we recognise that everyone is an individual we must also acknowledge that not everyone is valued and treated as such. Gender, race, special needs, ability, culture, religion, sexual orientation, and social background all contribute to the labelling and classifying of individuals in such a way as to obscure their individuality and limit the fulfilment of their potential.

AIMS

Equality of opportunity at Woodhouse Academy is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community - pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members. It is based on the following core values and ethos:

1. To challenge any discriminatory practice in school, both inside and outside the classroom
2. To promote racial awareness positively through the taught curriculum and Personal and Social Education, and through taking advantage of opportunities to do so as they arise on an ad hoc basis
3. To condemn offensive language and attitudes whenever they are exhibited both inside and outside the classroom
4. To ensure that all pupils are taught formally about the beliefs and customs of the world's major religions
5. To challenge stereotyped gender roles and to encourage all pupils to fulfil their individual potential regardless of gender
6. To ensure equal access to the curriculum for all, irrespective of social class/financial background, gender, race, ability, disability or sexual orientation
7. To seek to address inequality of access to extra-curricular activities

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Legal Framework

The “Public Sector Equality Duty” means that schools must adopt a proactive approach to equality. In practice, this requires all schools to:

- Take positive and proactive steps to identify areas of potential inequality before they have the chance to make an impact;
- Make changes to ensure that any areas of potential inequality are eliminated.

The Duty to Promote Race Equality came into force in 2002, the Duty to Promote Disability Equality in 2006 and The Gender Equality Duty in 2007. As of 1st April 2011, the Equality Act 2010 has required schools to meet a single Public Sector Equality Duty which encompasses ‘General and ‘Specific’ duties in promoting equality across the full range of protected characteristics, namely:

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Pregnancy & Maternity

8. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Disability Equality Scheme & Accessibility Plan
- Behaviour Policy
- Sex & Relationships Education Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Accessibility
- Medical conditions
- Anti-bullying

IN PRACTICE

- The Governors and the Leadership Team will apply the County’s Equal Opportunities in Employment guidelines on all issues regarding appointments and personnel
- The Leadership Team together with departments within the school will demonstrate a commitment to educating pupils for a multicultural society by

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reviewing whole school and departmental policies and schemes of work regularly, with these issues in mind

- Clear procedures will be in place for dealing with offensive attitudes, remarks or behaviour, when exhibited by either staff or pupils
- The Leadership Team will consider the gender balance within setted teaching groups in order to monitor any underachievement related to gender. Strategies will be implemented in order to minimize such underachievement
- The Leadership Team and heads of key stage will review the rewards and sanctions system in school to identify where gender discrepancies occur.
- Display work will be monitored by departments to ensure that it does not reinforce but challenges stereotyped roles in the areas of gender, race and ability.
- Pupils will be encouraged to identify their achievements and to express their own expectations and goals regularly
- Heads of Subject together with subject teachers will ensure that homework tasks are accessible to and achievable by all pupils irrespective of socio-economic backgrounds
- Woodhouse Academy works within the remit of the Disability and Discrimination Act 2005 where resources allow.

THE SCHOOL'S COMMITMENT TO RACE EQUALITY

This school's aims are:

- Ensuring that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their full potential
- Respecting and valuing differences between people
- Preparing pupils for life in a diverse society
- Acknowledging the existence of racism and taking steps to prevent it
- Making the school a place where everyone, irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, feels welcomed and valued
- Promoting good relations between different racial groups within the school and within the wider community
- Ensuring that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained

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- Opposing all forms of racism, racial prejudice and racial harassment
- Being proactive in tackling and eliminating discrimination

This policy contains explicit and specific statements which reflect the school's commitment to promote race equality.

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the academy's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

Definition of disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities;
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal Duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

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Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

Additional grants and resources (such as those provided for free school meal pupils) are appropriately targeted and monitored.

STAFFING: RECRUITMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Staff opportunities and promotions are made on basis of merit and ability adhering to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and LA guidelines.

Employer duties

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.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly

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when allocation Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

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

ASSESSMENT, PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS

All pupils have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The school ensures that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias, and that assessment methods are valid.

The school monitors and analyses pupil performance by gender, ethnicity and background and is therefore able to identify groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have very high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

Self-assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress.

All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment which summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning.

Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupils' progress.

BEHAVIOUR, DISCIPLINE AND EXCLUSIONS

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils.

There are strategies to reintegrate long-term truants and excluded pupils that address the needs of all pupils.

Exclusions are monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils.

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The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that cultural background may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline as stated within the school's Behaviour Policy.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable, should be recorded and suitable sanctions imposed.

ADMISSION AND ATTENDANCE

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all pupils, so that pupils from particular groups are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admissions forms which originate from the LA.

The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision is made for pupils on extended leave so that they are able to continue with their learning.

Attendance is monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate in the life of the school.

The school works in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to equality.

Meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

School events are designed to include the whole community.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation.

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

Mrs C Butler will be responsible for co-ordinating work in equal opportunities.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated by the member of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities, Mrs. C. Butler

The Governor responsible for Equal Opportunities is to be confirmed

REVIEWED : Autumn 2016

REVIEW DATE :

Mrs C Hamnett :
Chair of governors

Date :

Mrs C Butler :
Principal

Date :

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Appendix 1

Tackling discrimination

Harassment on account of ethnicity, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated with 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 are harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / principal where necessary. All incidents are reported to the principal and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic 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'.

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.

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Transgender Identity

People who consider themselves to be Transgender feel that their external appearance (sex) does not match up with the way they feel internally about their gender identity. A Female to Male (F2M) person will have the external appearance or body of a female and identify their gender as male; a Male to Female (M2F) person will have the external appearance or body of a male and identify their gender as female.

Gender Dysphoria (or Gender Identity Disorder) is a clinical condition that can present from as early as age 2 and can only be diagnosed by a medical and/or psychiatric expert. A person diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria may require treatment (e.g. hormone blockers) for the symptoms associated with being Transgender. A Transgender person may live their life without being or needing to be diagnosed as having Gender Dysphoria.

Some students may choose to be known by a different name or to adapt their uniform. However, most or all young people affected by Transgender Identity issues (and their families) will need some expert support as they grow up and develop.

Legislation

Legislation that informs the participation of Trans (including gender variant) students in schools and colleges include the Human Rights Act 1998, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010.

The Human Rights Act 1998

The following Articles from The Human Rights Act 1998 support the rights and needs of Trans people to live their lives in their true gender.

- Article 8: right to respect for private life and family life
- Article 10: freedom of expression
- Article 14: the prohibition of discrimination

The Gender Recognition Act 2004

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 is mainly concerned with the process by which a person can get a Gender Recognition Certificate, and correct their original birth certificate to match their true gender. This can only occur after a person reaches 18 years of age but is something that many younger people may aspire to.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 ensures legal protection against discrimination (direct or indirect) for everyone under the nine protected characteristics defined in the Act, one of which is Gender Reassignment (also known as Transgender). Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010 makes it clear that the Act specifically refers to Schools and young people

The Equality Act 2010 (2:1:7) states that;

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A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. The act applies to employment, education and a range of other areas where discrimination may take place. In order to be protected under the Act, a student will not necessarily have to be undergoing a medical procedure to change their sex, but they must be taking steps to live in the opposite gender, or be proposing to do so.

Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 ensures legal protection against discrimination in employment and education, the provision of services and the delivery of public functions, in relation to the nine protected characteristics defined in the Act, one of which is Gender Reassignment. **The legislation states that a school must not discriminate against a pupil because of their Transgender status.** An example might be an inflexible school uniform rule which offers no “unisex” options such as trousers for girls, and which would therefore create a particular difficulty for an F2M student.

The school recognises the need to/for:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people
- Use PSHE to raise the profile and understanding of Trans issues
- Unisex uniform
- Equal access to toilets
- Pastoral Support Plan with student to accurately gather views of student
- Additional ‘transition’ work at key points e.g.
 - Post-16 independent Careers Advice prioritised
 - Transition to High School - Additional support via:
 - Pastoral team
 - Transition Meetings
 - One to One Meetings with key Mentors

Terminology and Language

It is good practice to focus on correct terminology and the use of language in school. In addition, there may be a need to focus some education in class around sexual orientation and gender, so that young people have a clear understanding that sexual orientation (being heterosexual, bisexual, gay or lesbian) and gender (being male or female), are completely different things. Such education takes shape in the form of PSHE lessons, Assemblies and Enrichment Days at Woodhouse Academy.

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Terminology and language can be confusing around Trans issues. Different organisations and individuals sometimes prefer different terms to identify themselves and the nature of being Trans. Often Trans people choose a different first name for their new identities and want documentation and records to reflect this, for example, the school roll and register. It is extremely important, as a matter of fairness, respect and inclusion, to ensure that the correct gender, name and pronouns are used uniformly to address Trans people. Hearing people use 'him' or 'her' incorrectly can be uncomfortable or seriously detrimental for a Trans person to hear, especially when they are trying hard to confirm people's awareness of a new identity.

It can be very difficult for a Trans student, and the school to get used to the change of name or gender if the student has not been known by that identity since the start of their school career. There may well be times when a mistake is made and this can be embarrassing for all parties. Woodhouse Academy will ensure all staff are kept fully informed of any Trans students' desires in terms of naming and the use of pronouns.

Transphobia and Bullying

Transphobic incidents or crimes will be recorded and dealt with in the same manner as other incidents that are motivated by prejudice or hate e.g. racist and homophobic incidents.

Trans people are often the subject of prejudice and the target of bullying because of their "difference". This can be compounded by a lack of understanding and clear explanations; which in turn can generate confusion causing people to revert to learned negative gender stereotyping. Transphobic behaviour may be directed to the actual Trans person, a friend or supporter, or anyone that may be perceived to be Trans (whether they are Trans or not). All of these situations will be managed in line with Woodhouse Academy's anti bullying and behavioural policies.

Use of Toilets and Changing Facilities in School

Concerns of Trans students are that they may find themselves in vulnerable situations such as a toilet or changing room where they could fall victim to unwanted attention, that could (if escalated), lead to bullying, but equally, that they are seen and treated as a member of their true gender.

There are designated Unisex Accessible toilets and changing facilities clearly labelled in the school premises and the appropriate staff members will identify these to any Trans students to use.

Personal Social Health Education and Curriculum

PSHE lessons are an important part of preparing young people for some of the issues that they will come across in their lives. Awareness of Trans issues are embedded within the curriculum from the outset. Anti-discrimination assemblies are regularly held with mention of Transgender within these.

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School Uniform and Regulations

Woodhouse Academy maintains a thorough uniform policy which includes an option of trousers or a kick pleat skirt, standard unisex shirt, clip on tie and unisex blazer. Trans students are welcome to select trousers or skirt depending on their individual preference.

Changing Names

Changing their name and gender identity is a pivotal point for many Trans people. If a Trans student wishes to have their preferred name recognised on school systems, this needs supporting and will feed on to letters home, report cycles etc.

Furthermore the change of name and associated gender identity will be respected and accommodated in school. It is a real indicator that the Trans student is taking steps to, or proposing to move towards, a gender they feel they wish to live in.

Students will be entered for examinations under their current legal name (this may be different to their preferred Transgender name). Woodhouse Academy will ensure a strategy is agreed with the student and their parents / carers, with regards to examinations and the desired name to use when spoken to and the legal name used when completing official documentation.

Glossary of Terms

Binding – a [F2M](#) adolescent that is developing breasts may strap down their chest so that it is less obvious. This can be hot, uncomfortable and restrictive but very important to their psychological and emotional wellbeing. It might make certain PE lessons difficult for them to participate in and could sometimes lead to breathing difficulties, skeletal problems and fainting.

F2M – Female to Male, a person that was identified as Female at birth but came to feel that their true [gender](#) is actually male.

Gender – the way that a person feels about themselves in relation to their physical and mental self; the basis of their identifying as male, or female, or neither, or either, both.

Gender Dysphoria – the medical condition that describes the symptoms of being Transgender.

Gender Identity Disorder – GID is a medical term describing being Transgender, this tends not to be used owing to the subtext around the word disorder.

Gender Recognition Certificate – an official document presented by a Gender Recognition Panel that enables all official documents and records (including birth certificate) to be amended to the true gender of the individual thereby providing full legal recognition.

M2F – Male to Female, a person that was identified as male at birth but came to feel that their true gender is actually Female.

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Packing – a **F2M** person may wear a prosthetic item that will give a ‘bulge’ in their trousers to appear more male.

Sex – the way a person’s body appears, sometimes wrongly, to indicate their gender.

Transgender – a person who feels the assigned gender and sex at birth conflicts with their true gender.

Transitioning – the process by which a person starts to live in their true gender.

Trans – a word used as an umbrella term to encompass all forms of Transgender, Transsexual, Transitioning etc.

Transsexual – a Transgender person who lives full-time in their true gender.

True Gender – the gender that a person truly feels they are inside.

SMSC – Social, Moral, Spiritual & Cultural.

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Responding to and reporting incidents

