**WESTLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**EQUALITY PLAN**

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10. Introduction

Westlea Primary School is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion, or socio-economic background. The school aims to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and the school will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. The school will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. Westlea Primary School believes that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit the school.

The Equality Plan sets out Westlea Primary School’s approach to promoting equality and diversity. The school recognises the importance of ensuring that its policies and procedures are effective in promoting equality and tackling discrimination. The Plan responds to the statutory duties relating to disability, gender and race equality which require the publication of disability and gender equality schemes and a race equality policy. These documents are included in this Plan.

1. Equality into Policy and Practice

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

* Teaching and Learning

Westlea School aims to provide all of its pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, the school will:

* + use contextual data to improve the ways in which the school provides support to individuals and groups of pupils;
  + monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
  + take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
  + ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
  + use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
  + promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or

prejudice;

* + provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
  + seek to involve all parents in supporting their child’s education;
  + encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
  + include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of its pupils.
* Admissions and Exclusions
* Admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.
* Exclusions will always be based on the school’s Behaviour Policy. Should any child be excluded, the school would closely monitor the effect to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

1. Equal Opportunities for Staff

Westlea 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 on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. The school ensures, wherever possible, that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of its community.

As an employer, the school will ensure that it eliminates discrimination and harassment in employment practice and actively promotes equality across all groups within the workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff or re-evaluating the staffing structure, 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;
  + continuous professional development opportunities for all staff;
  + Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

1. Equality and the Law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2010) and Equality Act (2010) (updated 2012). Westlea Primary School will take the actions outlined in its Equality Plan Action Plan in order to meet the general duties detailed in this Equality Plan.

Race Equality

The general and specific duties of schools are detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The General Race Equality Duty requires the school to have due regard to the need to:

* + eliminate racial discrimination;
  + promote equality of opportunity;
  + promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under the school’s specific duty it will:

* + prepare an Equality Plan which includes a written policy for race equality;
  + assess the impact of policies, including this Plan, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils;
  + monitor the impact that plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents/carers towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school’s Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Plan.

* 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 their 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 its specific duty the school will:

* prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying the school’s disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
* review and revise this Scheme every three years.

Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 (updated to be included in the Equality Act 2010) 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 its general duty the school will actively seek to:

* eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
* promote equality between men and women.

Under its specific duty the school will:

* prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying 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, (now part of Equality Act 2010) 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.

Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths/beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

1. Consultation and Involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents/carers. Westlea School has achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

* + feedback from parent-teacher consultations and Friends of Westlea forum meetings;
  + input from staff surveys and through staff meetings/INSET;
  + feedback from the School Council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on pupils’ attitudes to self and school;
  + issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans;
  + feedback at Governing Body meetings.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

* The Role of the Governing Body
* The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will endeavour to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
* The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at the school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
* The Governing Body takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strives to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents/carers and pupils.
* The Governing Body welcomes all applications to join the school, whatever a child’s socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
* The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in the school on account

of their race, sex or disability.

* The role of the Headteacher
* It is the Headteacher’s role to implement the school’s Equality Plan and they are supported by the Governing Body in doing so.
* It is the Headteacher’s role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan and that

teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

* The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
* The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and

promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.

* The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.
* The role of staff (teaching and non-teaching)
* All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school’s Equality Plan.
* All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and

disability, and challenges stereotypical images.

* All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
* Teachers support the work of support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way

against any discriminatory incidents.

1. 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 are dealt with by the member of staff present. All incidents are reported to the Headteacher, with racist incidents reported to the Governing Body and to the Local Authority termly.

Harassment on grounds of race, 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 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;
  + refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

1. Review of Progress and Impact

The school makes on-going assessments of pupils’ learning and uses this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, the school regularly monitors achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

In line with legislative requirements, the school will review progress against its Equality Plan annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a yearly cycle.

The school will continue to give greatest consideration and resources to those areas it assesses as having the greatest need. Improving pupil achievement where differential is found to exist and promoting an inclusive environment are areas where particular attention will be focused.

Through its auditing process and the development of this plan, including taking account of the views of those consulted, the school Governing Body has identified that there are no equality and diversity issues requiring significant action over the three years of the Plan. In the light of this, the school has determined that the key action is to ensure that curriculum planning and resources will reflect the embodiment of equality across all subjects.

1. Publication

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, the school will:

* + publish the Equality Plan on the school website;
  + raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
  + ensure that hard copies are available