

Whitecote Primary School



Equality Policy

Agreed: February 2023

Review: February 2027

MODEL SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY STATEMENT WHITECOTE PRIMARY

Vision and values of Whitecote Primary

At Whitecote our pupils know that success comes with hard work and perseverance. Through teaching that goes beyond the curriculum they are able to fulfil their potential and achieve. Once a Whitecote pupil you are always a part of the Whitecote family.

Inspire, Nurture, Challenge

1. Introduction

Under [The Equality Act 2010](#) and [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2017](#) schools are no longer required to publish an equality scheme or action plan. The statutory requirements are for governing bodies of all maintained schools and academies to:

- draw up and publish equality objectives every four years;
- annually publish information demonstrating how they are meeting the aims of the general public sector equality duty
- draw up an accessibility plan¹ and review this every three years

It is still good practice however, for schools to make a statement about the principles used to review the impact on equalities of its policies and procedures, to identify how it fulfils its specific duties to publish information and how specific objectives will be determined and measured.

2. The legal framework and other considerations

At Whitecote Primary School we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to the protected characteristics of;

- age (*as appropriate for schools*);
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion and belief including lack of belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation

¹ A Leeds City Council template for a school accessibility plan can be found on: <http://www.leedsforlearning.co.uk/Communication>

Although socio-economic background is not a characteristic protected in law, it is very relevant to our school community. We are keen to ensure that people from deprived or disadvantaged backgrounds are not held back, but that they have every opportunity to achieve their full potential. This is therefore an additional characteristic of importance at Whitecote Primary School.

We also understand our Public Sector Equality Duty to assess the impact of our policies and practices on staff and pupils and take action to remove any obstacles identified, paying due regard to:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.
- fostering good relations across our school community and across all protected characteristics.

3. Guiding principles

In fulfilling our statutory duties we are guided by six principles.

Principle 1: All members of the school and wider community are of equal value

We see all members of the school and wider community of equal value, regardless of their characteristics and their background

Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but must differentiate, as appropriate, to take account of differences in people's life-experience, outlook and background. We must be aware of the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, for example in relation to a disability or because of their ethnicity:

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes, towards, and understanding and inclusion of disabled people in all aspects of school life. Also, good relations between groups and communities that are different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin, etc.
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people
- positive intergenerational attitudes and relationships

We will not tolerate and aim to eliminate bullying, harassment or any unkind, intolerant behaviour towards any of the groups mentioned above. Our vision is for a unified, supportive

and inclusive school community to which everyone can contribute and where everyone feels welcome and safe.

Principle 4: We will ensure that the recruitment, retention and ongoing development of staff is undertaken in a fair and equitable manner to support our school's vision and values

Policies and procedures should be as unbiased as possible, and should benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of their background and characteristics, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development. In selecting the best people to work at our school we will appoint on merit, but will take into consideration, where possible, the desirability of recruiting from groups that are currently under-represented on our staff:

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

Quite simply, our aim is to reduce, or if possible, remove any inequalities or barriers that may exist in our school that may prevent people from being welcomed, included in all aspects of school life, and from achieving their full potential. We aim to ensure that everyone has equal access to opportunities for learning, and opportunities for personal development. We also ensure that our school building and facilities are as accessible as possible to our children, staff and other stakeholders and, through regular accessibility audits, we identify and address any physical barriers

Principle 6: We consult widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. Where possible we will consult and involve people from across our school – including those with protected characteristics - in identifying our equality objectives, ensuring our school is as accessible as possible, and in measuring our progress and our success in building an inclusive school community.

4. Practical application of these principles

In the practical application of these principles and in fulfilling our duties under the Equality Act we will:

- ✓ Consult people in our community about the content and wording of this policy and about the ways we implement it
- ✓ Identify a number of areas of focus each year, i.e. ways in which we can move forward our equalities work. These areas of focus will be known as our equality objectives. We will publish the policy and our equality objectives on the school's website.
- ✓ We conduct an accessibility audit every 3 and produce an updated accessibility plan addressing any physical barriers that may prevent people from moving safely around school and using school facilities
- ✓ Monitor pupil progress by protected characteristic and socio-economic status to check that no group is being unreasonably left behind or marginalised
- ✓ Publish a short report each year outlining our equality activities and progress towards our objectives
- ✓ Promote an understanding and appreciation of British Values - through our curriculum

- ✓ Ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge and skills to enable them to implement this policy in their daily work.
- ✓ Ensure that staff are trained in the Prevent strategy

5. Ethos and organisation

We will ensure that the principles listed above apply also to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

1. Progress, attainment and assessment

We aim to ensure that every child reaches their full potential regardless of their characteristics or background. We use assessment methods and criteria that reflect the developmental stage of the individual child, ensuring that marking and feedback are appropriate and helpful to all.

2. Personal development, welfare and well-being

We aim to understand the needs of every individual and to ensure that, as far as is possible, these are met. We want to create a culture where both children and staff feel able to raise any wellbeing issues they face, feeling confident that they will be met with understanding and support.

3. Teaching styles and strategies

Our teachers and support staff know and engage with every individual child and tailor their delivery to ensure that each child reaches their potential. Our curriculum must reflect and be relevant to Whitecote children, but it should also broaden their horizons and raise their aspirations. Our children will learn that people are different, but equal and that difference is positive and not to be feared.

4. Admissions and attendance

Our admissions process is open and inclusive. We endeavour to ensure that we understand the special learning needs of children entering our school and that staff are briefed and supported so they can meet these needs. We work to maximise attendance by engaging and incentivising children, but also by working with and supporting families who struggle to achieve regular attendance. We provide additional support to some vulnerable children to assist them with the transition to secondary school.

5. Staff and governor recruitment

Where possible, we try to ensure that our governors and staff are representative of our school community whilst also bringing a wide range of diverse experiences, skills and perspectives to the running of our school.

6. Retention and professional development

We ensure that staff have equal access to opportunities for training, and professional development. We ensure that staff have the specialist training they need to implement this policy – for example in SEND, Pupil Premium, and Prevent. We ensure that staff are aware of the Equality Act and their responsibilities under the Act.

7. Behaviour, discipline and exclusions

We ensure that our behaviour policy reflects the nature and characteristics of our school community and that it is fairly and evenly applied. We want every child to have the opportunity to be an active, engaged member of our school community, so we seek additional external support for children who face particular challenges to assist them in attending and participating.

8. Working in partnership with and engaging parents, carers and guardians

We appoint learning mentors and we run regular activities to engage parents, carers and guardians, helping them to assist their children's learning.

9. Working with the wider community;

We organise visits and activities to give the children a sense of belonging to their local community. We also link with the community by welcoming volunteers into school, appointing community governors, and holding events such as fetes that are open to the public.

10. Participation of groups in wider school activities

We ensure that all children, regardless of their background and characteristics, can engage in all wider school activities such as trips, choir, sport and residential. We organise trips and visits to promote good relations between people with different characteristics – such as visits to a mosque and a temple and we nurture links with a school in Bradford (through the Linking Schools Project) with a very different ethnic profile to our own. We recognise the out-of-school achievements of individual children in activities such as gymnastics and swimming and encourage participation in the arts, for example through singing.

11. Preparing all members of the learning community for living and positively contributing to a diverse society.

In our classrooms (not least through PSHE) and in our assemblies we talk about black history, different religions and races and equality issues such as the suffragettes, alongside British values. We aim to prepare Whitecote children to play a positive role in our increasingly diverse society.

6. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

Whitecote School is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of building a fair and inclusive community for the benefit of everyone. The school will not tolerate behaviour

from any member of the community that conveys any kind of prejudice or hatred. In particular:

- prejudices related to disability and special educational needs
- prejudices related to racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia
- prejudices towards people from disadvantaged backgrounds

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.²

We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they were dealt with.³

7. Roles and responsibilities

Every adult at Whitecote Primary is covered by and held accountable to the Equality Act. We all have a role to play in the implementation of this policy.

Stakeholders	Responsibility
Governing Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensuring that the school meets its duties under the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality duty – Ensuring that this policy is implemented throughout school and taking appropriate action if the policy is breached – Working with the Head Teacher and other staff to build an inclusive school community – Appointing a governor to be the equalities lead
Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implementing this policy throughout school – Ensuring that all staff receive appropriate

² The governing body should ensure that such information is contained in the staff handbook

³ Guidance on reporting is given in Leeds City Council's "[Hate incident reporting guidance for children's settings and schools](#)"

	<p>training and support (including through induction) to enable them to fulfil their duties under this policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensuring that governors, visitors, contractors, parents and other stakeholders are aware of and in compliance with this policy – Actively challenging and taking appropriate action in the face of any discriminatory, harassing or bullying behaviour – Ensure that the school has published a set of equality objectives and an accessibility plan – Ensuring that an annual report on progress made towards the objectives is produced and published each year – Appointing a member of staff to lead Equalities work in school on a day-to-day basis – Leading by example
Senior Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Actively supporting the Head Teacher in implementing this policy, ensuring that their direct reports are aware of their responsibilities – Leading by example
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos throughout school, acting as positive role models for the children – Challenging and dealing with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur – Identifying and challenging bias and stereotyping in the curriculum – Support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language – Keeping up-to-date with equalities legislation and Prevent training

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Taking opportunities to raise and discuss British Values in their classrooms and assemblies – Ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to have their voices heard with regards to equality issues – Requesting appropriate training and support if needed – Monitoring the progress of pupils by agreed protected and other characteristics and aim to address any gaps – Ensuring that their assessment methods are fair, and appropriate for the developmental stage of the child – Presenting a curriculum which is engaging and meaningful to Whitecote children, but which also broadens their horizons and encourages them to understand that people are different but equal
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Supporting the school by helping to identify barriers in the school community and raising these with staff. – Embracing the principles of this policy and welcoming newcomers into the school community, regardless of their characteristics and background – Avoiding any discriminatory or bullying behaviour, acting as positive role models for the children
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being willing to learn about equality - Being interested in and accepting of people who are different from themselves - Being kind to everyone in school

8. Breaches of the policy statement

Breaches will be dealt with through the relevant policies and procedures, for example the grievance, behaviour or disciplinary policies.

9. Monitoring and review

Quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy will be collected and considered and adjustments to the policy, equality objectives, and accessibility plan will be made as appropriate. The Equalities Group will meet as required to review, discuss and plan the equalities work in school.

In particular achievement data, broken down as appropriate according to special educational needs and disabilities, ethnicity, English as an additional language, gender, socio-economic disadvantage (PP and FSM) and age will be included in the Standards Report, analysed and used to inform equality objectives.

10. Publishing information on the school's public sector equality duty

This policy is available electronically on the school website, in hard copy on request at the school office.