



Walkwood

Church of England  Middle School

Equality and Diversity Policy

Governing Body Committee responsible:	Pupils and Curriculum		
Approval granted:	8 July 2019	Review date:	Summer 2022

“We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him. They are the ones God has chosen for his purpose.”

Romans 8:28

“Church of England Schools have at their heart a belief that all children are loved by God, are individually unique and that the school has a mission to help each pupil to fulfil their potential in all aspects of their personhood: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. Schools have a duty to try to remove any factor that might represent a hindrance to a child’s fulfilment. We want all pupils to want to engage in learning in a safe and welcoming ethos.”

Valuing All God’s Children, Church of England, 2014

“The core purpose of any Church school is to maximise the learning potential of every pupil within the love of God.”

SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) 2012



Introduction

Walkwood Church of England Middle School has its ten core values which are called Fruits of faith. These are part of the school's everyday work, seeking to demonstrate the diversity of humanity under God's guiding grace. We will treat everyone fairly, celebrating difference and meeting different needs so that all members of our school community are free to Love to Learn, Learn to Live and Live to Love.



We aim to:

- maintain and promote a working partnership between the school, parents and community which fosters our Fruits of faith;
- 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.

Relating to the Equality Act (2010) there are nine 'protected characteristics':

1. age (for employees only),
2. disability,
3. race (includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality),
4. gender (including issues of transgender),
5. gender reassignment,
6. maternity and pregnancy,
7. religion and belief (includes lack of belief),
8. sexual identity,
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

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 eight protected characteristics (excluding marriage and civil partnership) to:-

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment;
- advance equality of opportunity;
- foster good relations between different groups.

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.



Defining Equality and Diversity

Equality

Equality is about fairness. Equality of opportunity, and advancing equality of opportunity, involves treating people differently. People should not be treated the same. Some people may need extra help or adjustments to be part of the school community; this includes teachers, administration, cleaning or catering staff employed at the school as well as pupils, parents and school governors.

Diversity

Diversity is about valuing people as individuals and learning from our differences. Our differences can be visible and non-visible. Promoting diversity we can meet different needs creatively to ensure opportunities are available to all and potential is fulfilled. It is about how we treat one another to respect our differences. Promoting diversity and a diversity friendly culture helps to create a more productive school community.

Aims

The key aims of our Equality Policy are to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- promote good relations between individuals from different groups;
- promote the Christian values of the school within positive relationships.

The school is therefore committed to:

- actively tackling discrimination, and promoting equal opportunities and good relations between groups;
- encouraging, supporting, and helping all students and staff to reach their potential;
- preparing all students to be full citizens in Britain;
- encouraging all students to develop a confident personal and cultural identity that is open to change and receptive and respectful towards other identities;
- working with parents and guardians, the Diocese, local clergy, and with the wider community, to tackle racial discrimination, and to follow and promote good race equality practice;
- making sure the Equality Policy and its procedures are followed.

These aims apply to all areas of school life. These include:

- pupil progress, attainment, and assessment;
- pupils' behaviour, discipline, and exclusion;
- pupils' personal development and pastoral care;
- teaching and learning;
- admission and attendance;
- the curriculum;
- staff recruitment, professional development and support for individual needs;
- partnerships with parents and carers, other schools, the wider community and the Diocese of Worcester.

This policy links to the following policies:



- Living and Learning Together
- Performance Appraisal
- Teaching and Learning
- Worship
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Race Equality

Purpose and Practice

This policy sets out Walkwood Church of England Middle School's commitment to promoting equality and diversity.

We believe that it is our responsibility to promote equality and diversity wider than the nine characteristics (areas) covered by legislation. We work to remove barriers and we will not unfairly discriminate on any grounds.

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by the following principles, which are part of the **Valuing all God's Children** document from the Church of England (2014):

All learners are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they have learning support needs or are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status;
- whatever their gender and gender identity;
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background;
- whatever their sexual identity.

Recognising and respecting difference

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised religion, belief or faith background;
- sexual identity.

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents/carers, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Fostering positive attitudes and relationships

Central to this is a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people;



- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Following good equalities practice

This applies in areas such as staff recruitment, retention and development. We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status;
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Seeking to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men.

Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled;
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- both women and men, girls and boys.

The policy applies to:

- School Governors
- Staff
- Parents
- Pupils (as appropriate)
- Visitors to the school
- Multiagency Professionals
- Contractors

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the school community, governors, staff, pupils, parents, and visitors all have a part to play in implementing this policy, promoting diversity and equality, challenging inappropriate behaviour or practice to remove barriers and avoiding discrimination.

To promote understanding of this responsibility the school will:



- ensure all employees are made fully aware of our Equality and Diversity Policy by drawing their attention to it and their responsibility to abide by it;
- ensure parents have access to the policy by placing it on the school's website;
- ensure pupils and visitors to our school are clear about the expectations relating to our commitment to promoting equality and diversity by including this in the handout provided at their signing in;
- provide staff training/ development and updates as appropriate;
- review our equality objectives and actions to ensure all relevant activity remains relevant and meets the identified needs and priorities of our school.

In addition School Governors have responsibility for overseeing, agreeing, monitoring and reviewing of our School's equality objectives, and related activity.

Breaches of Policy

Walkwood Church of England Middle School views any form of discrimination as an act of misconduct.

Any allegation of a breach in the policy will be investigated according to the Complaints Policy. This may lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action being taken.

Monitoring and review

Walkwood Church of England Middle School has specific duties under the Equality Act (2010) to publish information about the diversity of our school community and the work we are doing to promote equality. This information can be found on our school website.

Bullying and Diversity incidents

Pupils

Walkwood Church of England Middle School believes all pupils should be safe and feel valued for themselves, whatever characteristics they may have. Bullying and harassment of pupils, staff, parents, visitors by pupils on the basis of their identity (including a perceived characteristic, and by association with a protected characteristic) is unacceptable.

Incidents will be logged, investigated and appropriate actions taken to prevent future incidents and to support the victim as outlined in the School's Anti-bullying Policy.

Staff and Governors

Walkwood Church of England Middle School views any form of discrimination undertaken by adults as an act of misconduct. Any such breaches could result in disciplinary action being taken and, in the case of harassment, might call for police involvement.

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.

