



**WEST RISE**

WEST RISE JUNIOR SCHOOL

POLICY: Equal Opportunities

Date of Policy: September 2016

Ratified by Governors: 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Signed:

Review Date: September 2018

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*At West Rise Junior School we inspire and empower independent and creative learners who will continue to enrich their lives and those of others within a culture of high achievement and mutual respect*

*At West Rise Junior School we aim to identify and support all pupils following guidance laid out in the East Sussex Dyslexia Policy.*

*West Rise Junior School is a Rights Respecting School and puts the articles of the UNICEF Children's Rights Charter at the heart of all school policy.*

*This policy reflects that as a school we recognise that all children have the right to be safe, be educated and learn, be treated fairly, be listened to, a healthy lifestyle, extra support if they need it and a right to join in cultural and artistic activities.*

### **Why we have developed this Equality Policy**

This Equality Policy for West Rise Junior School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those we had previously. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 (See Appendix A). We are committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our local, national and global environments.

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

Children vulnerable to under achievement are now eligible for additional support through the Pupil Premium.

## 1 Aims and objectives

1.1 To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

1.2 To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.

1.3 To promote positive attitudes to difference, and good relationships between people with different faiths, backgrounds, genders, abilities and ethnic origins.

1.4 We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning.

1.5 We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.

*Our vision statement: At West Rise Junior School we inspire and empower independent and creative learners who will continue to enrich their lives and those of others within a culture of high achievement and mutual respect*

The school vision promotes equality by reinforcing the message of mutual respect and consideration for others.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practises. We aim to meet the needs of all learners. We cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

## 2. Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (see Appendix A). We have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all. We try to identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties to equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the following:

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements

- behaviour management and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the schools arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- activities to enrich the curriculum e.g. experiential writing days, visitors, or Theatre Education.
- school sports
- employees and staff welfare.

### **3 The role of governors**

**3.1.** The governing body will show commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.

**3.2** The governing body seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities.

**3.3** The governing body will, in its annual report, make reference to arrangements for disabled pupils.

**3.4** The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.

**3.5** The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

### **4 The role of the headteacher**

**4.1** It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's equal opportunities and race equality policy he is supported by the governing body in so doing. He must also keep the Governing Body up to date with the effectiveness of the policy annually.

**4.2** It is the headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

**4.3** The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

**4.4** The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.

**4.5** The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

## **5 The role of the Senior Leadership Team**

**5.1** will have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing the policy.

**5.2** Will provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy.

**5.3** With the Head, will work to provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents or issues.

**5.4** Assist in challenging any incidents of prejudice or racism. Any serious incidences are reported to SLT/Headteacher (see Behaviour Policy). SLT are responsible for supporting the work of teaching and support staff, and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

## **6. The role of pupils/students:**

**6.1** To be expected to act in accordance with the Policy, and to be aware of sanctions if they do not.

**6.2** To be actively encouraged to support the Policy through whole school ethos, behaviour, attitude and a strong RE and PSHEe curriculum.

## **7. How we originally developed our Policy and how we aim to review it:**

The development of the policy has involved our entire school community. We have engaged with them and listened to what they had to say.

### **7.1 Pupils/Student:**

We accessed parent and student views by sending out a parent and pupil questionnaire. We have also channelled the view of pupils in building the Friendship and Antibullying Policy through the Pupil Council.

#### 7.2 Staff:

Staff received a questionnaire. There was also discussion in SMT meetings, staff meetings and TA meetings which informed the policy.

#### 7.3 Governors:

Discussion of policy with Governors.

#### 7.4 Parents/Carers:

Our school has a website and FaceBook page through which parents can communicate their views. An individual newsletter will inform parents of our policy and ask for comment.

#### 7.5

Minority/marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups:

We have listened to the views of parents/carers who have a disability and made adjustments to allow for this.

#### 7.6 Our partners in the community:

We will arrange review policy meeting workshops for parents/carers to access. We have also worked with Langney Area Forum.

#### 7.7 How we developed our Policy - Using information

We have used data and other information about our school, and Equality Impact assessments (EQIAs) to determine the effects of a policy, practice or project on different groups. EQIAs help us to analyse whether what we are planning potentially has a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). They help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. They help to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

We carried out EQIAs in the form of discussions and surveys. We used this, rather than an additional paper exercise, to ensure that we are not unfairly discriminating against any group.

The engagement activities we undertook as outlined above told us that we are not discriminating unlawfully and that our current practises are inclusive.

In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect our own data and constantly self evaluate. Our School development plan reflects this.

We also use data from Raise Online, incident reports, behaviour, exclusion reports, parental questionnaires and staff discussion to gather whole school information.

OfSTED inspectors visit us regularly and report on equality issues during our inspection. We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, faith, disability and gender. Our Self Evaluation Form means we are constantly assessing the needs of our pupils and staff and how well we are meeting these needs.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil/learner voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously. Nikki Beard, head of Pastoral Support hosts Coffee Morning on Friday afternoons for parents and carers to drop in. We also offer Pupil Voice questionnaires to children who may be vulnerable.

The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. We have a multi agency approach to working with vulnerable groups including the use of CAMHS, SALT, TEALS, the Antibullying Team, School Nurse, local PCSO's and the EP. We have established good links with these services and with the local community. We welcome visitors into our school and from them aim to learn about equality outside of school. Other links include:

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- Choir links to local Nursing and Residential homes singing at Christmas
- Forest Schools - making use of our marshland as a place for the community
- Cranbrook House - links with older children and senior citizens
- Room 13 and links with the Towner Gallery in Eastbourne
- Representatives from major faiths invited to the school
- Links with local charity Foodbank and associated assemblies

## **8. Equality for Staff**

West Rise Junior complies fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

We adhere to County policy regarding discrimination and harassment. Staff are encouraged to discuss any grievance or concerns they have with a senior member of staff.

We make efforts to ensure that our diverse workforce reflects that of our local community. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

## **9. Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying**

9.1 At West Rise we recognise that hate incidents or prejudice -based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour. (See Friendship and Antibullying Policy).

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore differences in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying using SIMs. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators.

9.2 A key aspect of British Values is that of respect and tolerance. Through our PSHEe and SEAL curriculum (including philosophy sessions) and by adopting a Rights based approach to behaviour across the school, we aim to help foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice - including homophobia - and promote understanding and respect, enabling schools to meet the requirements, and live the intended spirit, of the Equality Act 2010.

## **10. Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

This policy is reviewed every 2 years.

The policy may be shared;

- via the school website
- in a staff meeting with teachers
- In a governor's meeting
- The pupil council will also have the opportunity to review it

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior

Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities.

## **Appendix A Key legislation**

### Equality Act 2010

#### Equality Act 2010

Harmonises and streamlines existing equality legislation into one Single Act.

The Act protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on 'protected characteristics':

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

This relates to:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

The Act also contains positive action provisions which enable schools to take proportionate action to address disadvantage faced by particular pupils. Such action could include targeted provision, resources or putting in place additional or bespoke provision to benefit a particular disadvantaged pupil group.

The Public Sector Equality Duty commenced in April 2011.

There are exceptions to enable single-sex schools to admit only pupils of one sex and for schools with a religious character to enable them to have admissions criteria which give preference to members of their own religion.

For more information:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/>

#### Accessibility planning

Accessibility planning is a statutory duty and can be incorporated into this policy.

Schools must plan for:

- Increasing access for disabled children and young people to the school curriculum
- Improving access to the physical environment of schools, and
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people

The first plans were required to be in place by April 2003. Therefore as schools come to review their accessibility plans they should consider building these actions into their Equality policy. A comprehensive Access Resource Pack to support schools with accessibility has been developed by the Development Planning Team at ESCC and sent out to all schools. Schools should contact Darren Guyett (01273 481314) if they require a copy.



## Community Cohesion – Education and Inspection Act 2006

### General duty

- To promote community cohesion

### Specific duties

- Teaching, learning and curriculum – helping children to learn to understand others, to value diversity while also promoting shared values
- Equity and excellence – to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest possible level
- Engagement and extended services – to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations with different schools and communities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.