



## **EQUALITY POLICY WESTERN ROAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**January 2023**

This working document will continue to be monitored and reviewed after publication. It will be updated annually, as necessary. Any comments on this document will be welcomed by Headteacher Irèna Wooler.

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

This Equality Policy for Western Road Community Primary School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and fully respects and seeks to promote the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In March 2021 we established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working party made up of two ED&I governors, two members of school staff plus a member of the SLT and two parents of pupils at the school. The working party drew up the 2021 – 2022 ED&I Policy. That Policy has since been reviewed by the Full Governing Body (FGB) which has assessed the school's progress against the ED&I objectives for 2021 – 2022 and, carrying forward some of those objectives, has set new objectives for 2022 – 2023.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - with whom we have engaged and who will continue to be actively involved in its development.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between groups.
- 
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

### **Our school within the wider context**

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation. We recognise that the demographics in our school's population are likely, in some respects, to be out of line with national figures. In terms of protected characteristics there is less representation than is the national average. This prompts us to recognise that we need to support, protect and include the children in our community who do have protected characteristics and how important it is that we support all of our children to understand and appreciate the diversity within the school and the world beyond Lewes.

In 2022, reflecting the first objective of the 2021 – 2022 Policy, we published on our website data and commentary on the school's demographics, comparisons with East Sussex and nationally and what we knew about outcomes for and the inclusion of particular groups at Western Road Community Primary School. In publishing data, we were mindful of the need to protect the identities of individual children.

### **Overall aims of our Equality policy**

- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.
- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy reflects the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes.
- Issues relating to adults within the school community can be embraced under these themes and reflected in the action plan.

### **Our approach**

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

### **We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:**

- Shared Humanity: Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality.

- Valuing difference and diversity: We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better.
- Interdependence, interaction and influence: We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other.
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community.
- Excellence: We aim to recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world.
- Personal and cultural identity: We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities.
- Fairness and social justice: We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society.

These concepts are linked to and evidenced by WRCPS' vision and values:

**Our Vision:** Western Road Community Primary School is a nurturing, creative community where everyone can flourish.

**Our Values:**

Well-rounded

Resilient

Courageous

Pupil voice

Skilled

*Lewes and beyond*

By the end of their journey at Western Road Community Primary School, children will:

- Have a deep understanding of the world around them on both a local and a global scale;
- Be able to apply skills to familiar and unfamiliar situations;
- Be optimistic and resilient to challenges and change;
- Be confident in reading, writing and the use of mathematics;
- Have social and emotional intelligence for themselves and the needs of others;
- Be confident and have high self-esteem;
- Be kind and praise others;
- Have respect for each other and themselves;
- Have a love of life-long learning;
- Be ready for their next challenge;
- To see themselves as valued citizens of their local community and of the world, who can use their voice to express their values and affect change.

**Our vision statement about Equality**

Western Road Community Primary School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environment, which encourages all children to flourish and allows us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, to resolve conflicts peacefully and to work and learn free from harassment and violence.

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. We seek to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same: inclusivity by its very nature must involve making reasonable adjustments to the divergent needs of individuals, in order to maximise the inclusion of all.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

### **Our duties**

We welcome our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and, as we have done in developing this policy, will involve the whole school community in addressing those duties in order to ensure better outcomes for all. We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between different groups of pupils and the wider school community.

We will consider whether to provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, particularly where the child is not provided for under an Education, Health and Care Plan or SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) statement, or where the Plan does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

**We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties under equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.**

**These opportunities are likely to include 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
- assessment and accreditation
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- restorative justice and support, whilst reserving the right, in extremis, to exclusion procedures (it is noted that there have been no exclusions, fixed term or permanent, in the last few years)

- school clubs, activities and school trips
- employees' and staff welfare
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum
- school sports

Each year, advised by the Senior Leadership Team and those Governors who lead on equality, diversity and inclusion, the Full Governing Body (FGB) will adopt a set of specific equality objectives. Those objectives will be built into the School Improvement Plan. The FGB will monitor the fulfilment of the objectives and publish a report on what has been achieved, at the same time setting new objectives for the coming year.

### **The roles and responsibilities within our school community**

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers and pupils are engaged in the development of the Equality Policy and that by publishing it, it is easily accessible to visitors and contractors
- oversee and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effective implementation of the policy, publishing this information
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- ensure that the Senior Leadership Team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our Governing Body will:

- designate governor/s with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy
- always seek to ensure the implications for equality, diversity and inclusion in all new policies, projects and plans have been fully considered by the SLT - as evidenced by the minutes of FGB meetings
- evaluate and review the policy and the objectives annually, ensuring that the results are published

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting all staff in implementing this Policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues

- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP
- consider the implications for equality, diversity and inclusion in all new school policies, projects and plans

Our pupils will:

- be expected to act in accordance with and to actively support the policy
- appropriate to age and ability, participate in the development, implementation and monitoring of the policy

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the continued development of the Policy
- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the continued development of the policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

We will share our Policy with our partners, for example, the LCLP, the Lewes partnership within the EIP and Diversity Lewes and will learn from their views and practice, revising the Policy as appropriate.

### **How we will continue to develop our Policy - Participation and Involvement**

In the further development of this Policy, we plan to listen to the views of:

- Our pupils – involving the School Council in the 2022 - 2023 school year. That Council includes as class representatives pupils with SEND, an issue highlighted in the published 2022 data report
- Our pupils' parents and carers – continuing to consult, for example, the Parent Forum
- Our staff – we will continue to explore and implement their suggestions for how to engage the whole school community
- Our school governors - regularly considering the implementation of the Policy at Governing Body meetings

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

### **Our Staff**

Staff wellbeing is a priority for both governors and the SLT at WRCPS. Staff are to be given opportunities for supervision and coaching. We seek to analyse and take action on staff views through regular staff surveys. In this way we are able to identify underlying and otherwise invisible issues.

We comply 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.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices.

### **Responding to prejudice-based incidents and bullying**

At Western Road, we seek to create a nurturing community where all pupils are emotionally intelligent about themselves and others and respect and are kind to each other. We recognise, nonetheless, that prejudice –based bullying behaviour can occur in school, reflecting patterns of behaviour in wider society. Such 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.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. gender, skin colour or disability.

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 the subtleties and complexities of diversity in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, those responsible, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

We will record all prejudice-based bullying (using our automated safeguarding and behaviour recording system - CPOMS). 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 those responsible and their families and education for our children, young people and communities (see also our school Behaviour Policy).

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

### **Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

This policy will be subject to continuous development and review as described above. It will be actively promoted and disseminated.

The Senior Leadership Team and our governors will support the implementation of this Policy through a set of specific and measurable objectives in the course of the 2022 - 2023 school year.

### **Equality Objectives**

Using the views of parents, staff and governors and analysis of the information as outlined above we will set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These will be reviewed and published every year. The objectives flow on from our school vision and values, and our SIP (School Improvement Plan). We will be able to measure outcomes by looking at data recorded, the curriculum maps, class blogs, pupil and staff and parent voice, and the SIP). Our assessment of progress against our 2021 – 2022 objectives and our objectives for 2022 - 2023 are set out below.

## **WRCPS EQUALITY OBJECTIVES: 2021 – 2022 AND 2022 – 2023**

### **1: Data:**

Our first objective for 2021 – 2022 was to compile, audit and publish, by 31.01.2022, a data set of Western Road pupils from protected and other potentially disadvantaged groups; to analyse how those children fare in participation or outcomes in comparison with their peers in Western Road, East Sussex and more widely; and to plan remedial action as appropriate.

This objective was substantially achieved. In 2022, we published and commented on data on pupil outcomes at Western Road, with comparison with outcomes in East Sussex and nationally, taking care to publish only such data as would preserve pupils' anonymity.

In 2022 – 2023 our objective is to analyse data and other evidence on children's attendance at school and engagement in school activities. We will monitor such indices as the attendance of girls, and of boys, of children who speak English as a additional language and children from ethnic minorities; attendance and attainment of Pupil Premium and children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and children who have 'looked after' status and children with SEMH (Social, Emotional, Mental Health) needs; and engagement in out-of-school hours and sports clubs.

### **2) Curriculum:**

Our second objective for 2021 – 2022, by 27.05.2022 to have reviewed our curriculum by the INSET day on 27th May, to ensure that it was accessible for all pupils and provided opportunities to appreciate their community in Lewes, and what it shared with, and how it differed from, the world beyond so that pupils could understand, appreciate and respect difference in the world and its people.

This objective was met and remains under continuous review. During 2020 and 2021 we had substantially revised our curriculum in all subjects and across all stages of the school. In 2021 – 2022, we scrutinised the intent, implementation and impact of

that curriculum to ensure that it matched the ambitions of this policy. We assessed progress through learning visits, book and display scrutiny, pupil voice and our assessment.

In 2022 – 2023 our objective is to improve knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable pupils to appreciate and value difference and diversity. We will achieve this by:

- Promoting equality with regard to race, gender, disability, religion and ethnicity in our school curriculum.
- Promoting equality with regard to race, gender, disability, religion and ethnicity in our assemblies, making links to our core values of respect, determination and happiness.
- Monitoring and evaluating pupils' attitudes and knowledge around diversity and equality.

### **3) Contacts:**

Our third objective for 2021 - 2022 was to establish live links with schools elsewhere in the country and abroad which reflected contrasting characteristics in terms of culture, faith, ethnicity, economy or urbanity.

This was an ambitious objective and included aspirations that each class should link with many other schools, that the Senior Leadership Team should establish a partnership with a school with contrasting demographics, that we should explore how the diversity of the school and local community might enhance enrichment activities and that all staff should strive to keep up to date with ED&I issues. The pressures of the 2021 – 2022 school year, including the need to address the impact of Covid-19, meant that this objective could not be fulfilled even though staff members did seek to reflect the principles of this ED&I Policy in their professional development and practice. Nonetheless, contact with schools and communities beyond Lewes remains an important aspect of the school's values.

Our objective for 2022 – 2023 is, therefore, to establish live links with one school elsewhere in the country and one abroad which reflect contrasting characteristics in terms of culture, faith, ethnicity or urbanity.

### **4) Behaviour:**

Our fourth objective for 2021 – 2022 was to continue to ensure that all incidents of racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ageist, excluding or 'other-ing' language being used were accurately recorded on CPOMS. Even seemingly minor incidents would be logged as accurately as possible. By the end of term one in 2021 - 2022, we would have provided guidance to all staff to ensure these incidents were logged consistently across the school

This objective was partially met. Additional staff training was given to all staff, along with ensuring behaviour and safeguarding were constant agenda items for all staff meetings to highlight the importance of recording all incidents. The DSL and DDSL monitored, and continue to monitor, CPOMS to identify children needing additional support, communication with parents and carers and adaptations to curriculum planning and enrichment activities. The DSL met with the Safeguarding Governor

each term to report on and discuss all incidences recorded on CPOMS. These reports formed part of the termly FGBs throughout 2021 – 2022.

Our objective for 2022 – 2023 is to continue to identify and record all incidents of prejudice-based incidents. We will continue to raise staff awareness around inclusive behaviour and the unintentional impact of learned behaviours through regular feedback, support and training. We will continue to support staff to develop skills in identifying and challenging discrimination. Through the continuing professional development of all staff, we shall seek to ensure that children are comfortable to speak-up without fear of dismissal, reprisal or marginalisation.

**5) Continuing development of this policy through community engagement:**

Our fifth objective for 2021 – 2022 was to develop our ED&I Policy through staff, pupil and community engagement.

While staff had the opportunity to contribute to and edit this document, and while the Parent Forum was consulted in its development, we have not yet been able fully to engage all stakeholders.

Our objective for 2022 – 2023 is, therefore, to engage pupils through the School Council, parents through further discussion with the Parent Forum and to seek the views of the wider local community.