



## Equality Policy

### Introduction

This policy outlines the commitment of the Governors and Staff of White Ash school to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community.

For our school this means, not simply treating everybody the same but, understanding and removing the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, whilst also celebrating and valuing the equal opportunity achievements and strengths of all members of the school community.

These include:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents/carers
- The governing body
- Multi-agency staff linked to the school
- Visitors to school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. This policy applies to the whole school community. It has been drawn up as a result of the outcomes of a transparent process and through consultation with:

- The School Council
- Governors
- Whole school staff
- Parents and carers

## **Context**

White Ash is a LA maintained community special school with a wide range of SEND from age 3 to 11 years of age. Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent.

There are currently 113 pupils on roll which includes 84 boys and 29 girls. The school is located in Oswaldtwistle. The majority of the pupils come from the Hyndburn and Ribble Valley area, with others from Burnley and Rossendale. Most pupils travel via Local Authority Transport.

The school population represents a diverse range of backgrounds including a high proportion of pupils who qualify for Pupil Premium. This indicates that social deprivation is an important factor with regard to our pupils. We have 3 Looked After Children.

We also have a large population of pupils from an ethnic minority background where English is an Additional Language.

Pupil admission is by placement through the LA SEN Office.

### **1. School Mission**

At White Ash Primary School, we are 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. We aim 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 we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At White Ash Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Parents, carers and governors are encouraged to be fully involved within the life of the school and in the communication of basic beliefs, principles and values, which the school strives to promote through the education of the children and young people.

## **2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice**

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

### **Teaching and learning**

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide 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.
- Use materials/resources that include sexual orientation; transgender; religion; race and belief.
- Provide an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources.
- Ensure curriculum content is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of each individual child and that planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice.
- Use language use appropriate language which creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document.
- 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.
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of all our pupils.

### **Extended Learning Opportunities**

White Ash is an inclusive school, and we provide equal access to all activities from an early age. We undertake responsibility for making contributions to extended learning opportunities and are aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity (e.g. sports coaches, MIDAS trained drivers) by providing them with written guidelines drawn from this policy. Please read our Inclusive Practice Policy.

### **Admissions and exclusions**

Our 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.

### **3. Equal Opportunities for Staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at White Ash Primary School.

To this end:

- We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.
- Ensure that all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

### **Employer duties**

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and faith or religion are

considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

We also aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and establish a governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to respect and respond to the diverse needs of our population.

At White Ash Primary School, we will ensure this commitment is met by:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention, including bullying and harassment of staff.
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff.
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

Note:

Under the Equality Act 2010, in very limited circumstances, an employer can claim that a certain religious denomination or belief is considered to be a genuine occupational requirement of that role. An aided school may be able to rely on this for some roles in school, particularly those roles that provide spiritual leadership. However, this would not apply for all staff in School.

In addition, there are also instances in which a job will qualify for a genuine occupational requirement on the grounds of gender. However, only in very few instances would this be accepted, for example, where the job is likely to involve physical contact with members of the opposite sex, where matters of decency or privacy are involved.

#### **4. Equality and the law**

The Equality Act 2010 has brought together all the current discrimination laws into one and sets out the “protected characteristics” that qualify for protection from discrimination as:

- age (relevant in considering our duties as an employer, but not in relation to pupils)
- disability
- gender reassignment

- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- socio-economic background
- sex; and
- sexual orientation

The Act introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), sometimes referred to as the general duty. The combined equality duty has 3 main elements and in carrying out our functions we will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation that are prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The specific duties, which will help us to fulfil our obligations under the general duty require us to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and prepare and publish an Equality Plan.

### **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.

### **5. 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 and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from the parent questionnaires, parents' evening and parent forum meetings.
- Input from all staff through teaching staff meetings and support staff meetings/INSET.
- Feedback from the School Council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school (Pupil Attitude Questionnaires)
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support.
- Feedback at Governing body meetings.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of governors:**

- The Governors of White Ash Primary School have set out their commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender, race, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion and belief and disability.
- The Governors of White Ash Primary School seek to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion and belief or disability.
- The Governors of White Ash Primary School take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- The Governors of White Ash Primary School welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or disability.
- The Governors of White Ash Primary School ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on grounds of their race, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, religion and belief or disability.

### **The role of the Headteacher: -**

- It is the role of the Headteacher to implement the school's Equality Plan, and he is supported by the Governing Body in doing so.
- It is the role of the Headteacher 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, homophobic, biphobic, islamophobic, disablist, prejudiced-based incidents, with due seriousness.

### **The role of all staff: teaching and support:**

- 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.
- All staff will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school adhere to our commitment to equality.

## **7. Tackling discrimination**

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability, faith & beliefs, gender re-assignment 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. The staff of White Ash Primary School have clear guidelines on 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 a member of the Senior Leadership Team although we have none to date.

## **8. Review of progress and impact**

The Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a three-year cycle. We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor 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.

## **9. Publishing the plan**

To meet the statutory requirements to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, we will:

- Publish our plan on the school website.
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.
- Ensure a spoken recorded copy is available for those who require it.
- Ensure hard copies are available.

Reviewed December 2023

Next Review September 2025

Signed: ..... (Chair of Governors)      Date: .....