



# Winchelsea School

**Winchelsea School**  
**Guernsey Road**  
**Poole BH12 4LL**

<b>Equality Policy</b>			
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## **General Statement**

Winchelsea School supports the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of People with disabilities and the Human Rights Act 1998. Through our policies and actions, we undertake to ensure that every child and young person is healthy, safe, is able to enjoy and achieve in their learning experiences, and is able to contribute to the local wider community.

The school's actions are intended to ensure the school's adherence to its public duties and to bring together the school's approach for promoting equality in its policies and procedures and to ensure that these are reflected in our day-to-day practices and interactions with the whole school community. The whole school community is considered to consist of pupils, staff, governors, parents and carers and all stakeholders within our extended school community.

In addition to meeting the duties described above, our actions will embody the school's key principles and values:

- We strive to make the best possible provision for all pupils, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin or status, gender or sexual orientation.
- We respect diversity. We believe the process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given an equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life. This means that we do our best to make reasonable adjustments for disability, recognise and celebrate cultural differences, and understand the different needs and experiences of boys and girls.
- Equality is not simply about protecting the potentially vulnerable. We believe that all children may be disadvantaged by the holding of prejudicial views and seek to promote good relationships between all groups, and positive attitudes towards disabled people, people from different ethnic or cultural groups or faith backgrounds and people of different gender or sexual orientation.
- We value staff for their ability and potential to help us make the best possible provision for the children in our school, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin, gender or sexual orientation.
- We are proactive in our efforts to identify and minimise existing barriers or inequalities.
- We seek the views of all groups affected by the policies and work of our school, and try to involve them in policy review where practical.
- We recognise our role in promoting community cohesion and British values.

## **The Public Sector Equalities Duty**

The Equalities Act 2010 harmonises and streamlines previous different pieces of anti-discrimination law introduced over the last forty years.

From April 2011, all schools have been bound by what is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty from the Equalities Act 2010 and this statement outlines how this school endeavours to have **due regard** for the three main components of this duty in relation to the nine protected characteristics, all of which are explained below.

### **Three Main Components of the Public Sector Equalities Duty**

This school has considered what each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equalities Duty means in its own context and is committed to carrying them out:

**1. Eliminate Discrimination** – this school will take clear actions that will endeavour to redress any harassment (defined by us as verbal, emotional or physical attacks that happen more than once) and victimisation (defined by us as being singled out to be persistently intentionally harmed) of children/young people or adults that has changed their ability to function in the school environment in their usual way.

**2. Advance Equality of Opportunity** – this school believes that it is the responsibility of every member of the whole school community to ‘narrow the gaps’ (theirs and/or other people’s) in order to make progress socially, emotionally and academically.

**3. Foster Good Relations** – this school will draw on and emphasise the common purposes within it in order to support, develop and achieve harmonious relationships across the whole school community. We aim for all children, parents and carers to be fully engaged in school life.

### **Protected Characteristics**

The Equality Act 2010 brings together a number of existing laws for ease of use. The Act sets out the personal characteristics that are protected by the law and the behaviour that is deemed unlawful, i.e. direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The nine Protected Characteristics to which these aims are applied are:

- ❖ Age
- ❖ Disability

- ❖ Race
- ❖ Gender Reassignment
- ❖ Sex
- ❖ Marriage and civil partnership
- ❖ Pregnancy and maternity
- ❖ Religion and belief
- ❖ Sexual orientation

\*different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if it can be justified (for example as a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim). Age is the only protected characteristic that allows employers to justify direct discrimination, i.e. setting a maximum age for employment.

### **Guiding Principles Underlying the Implementation of the Equalities Duty Aims**

The Equalities Act explains that having due regard of the aims to eliminate discrimination and to foster good relations will involve the need to **tackle prejudice and promote understanding**.

***WARNING - It must be noted that all schools have a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and its public sector duties. Failure to do so could result in legal action against the school's Governing Body. Employees of the school acting on behalf of the Governing Body are also liable for their own discriminatory actions.***

To fulfil the school's legal obligations and to reinforce our ethos, we are guided by nine principles:

#### **Principle 1**

##### **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 are disabled;
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status;
- Whatever their gender or gender identity;
- Whatever their sexual identity.

#### **Principle 2**

##### **We Recognise and Respect Difference**

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but never the less take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background as well as 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 recognized;
- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognized;
- Sexual identity.

### **Principle 3**

#### **We Foster Positive Attitudes and Relationships and a Shared Sense of Cohesion and Belonging**

The school's policies, procedure and activities need to promote:

- Positive attitudes and actions towards disabled people, good relationships 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.
- Mutual respect and good relationships between girls and boys, women and men and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

### **Principle 4**

#### **We Observe Good Equalities Practice in Staff Recruitment, Retention and Development**

The school's policies, procedures need to 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.
- Whatever their age.

### **Principle 5**

#### **We Aim to Reduce and Remove Inequalities and Barriers**

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

- Disabled and non-disabled;
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- Girls and boys, women and men;
- People of any sexual orientation.

## **Principle 6**

### **We Consult and Involve Widely**

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in review of existing ones as far as practical considerations allow. Consultation involves:

- Disabled and non-disabled;
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- Girls and boys, women and men;
- People of any sexual orientation.

## **Principle 7**

### **We Address Prejudice and Prejudice Related Bullying**

There is no place at Winchelsea School for prejudice or bullying.

The school opposes any form of prejudice which might prevent the school from fulfilling its legal duties. Such prejudice can concern issues of:

- Disability and special educational needs;
- Racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed against religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islam phobia, and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- Sexism or homophobia.

## **Principle 8**

### **Society as a Whole Should Benefit**

School 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 and non disabled;
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- Girls and boys, women and men;
- People of any sexual orientation.

## **Principle 9**

### **The Setting of Objectives**

In order to ensure that the school has due regard for the application of these principles, an Equalities Action Plan has been drawn up. This will be reviewed annually during the Spring term and refreshed on a three yearly cycle.

The school is required by law to publish information which demonstrates compliance with the equalities duties and then also prepare and publish specific and measurable objectives. An Action Plan is the most effective means of meeting this end.

### **The Implementation of Change**

When significant new policies or procedures are introduced, the school should undertake an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) to ensure that the intended change does not have the potential to produce any unforeseen consequences and inadvertently discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable people as well as introducing appropriate mitigations where relevant.

### **Collecting and Analysing Equality Information for Pupils**

Winchelsea School is an inclusive school. We will record incidents of bullying/prejudice of any kind in line with Local Authority guidelines.

We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential.

We collect and analyse the following equality information for our pupils:

- Attainment levels
- Progress levels
- Attendance levels
- Behaviour Data
- Exclusions
- Attendance at Extended School activities/extra curricular activities (e.g. school trips)
- Participation in School Council

### **Collecting and Analysing Equality Information for Employment and Governance**

Winchelsea School is committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

Winchelsea School also aims to recruit an appropriately qualified and skilled workforce and Governing Body that is able to provide a service that respects and responds to the diverse needs of the school community.

The School Workforce Census enables us to collect data on staff relating to gender, race and disability. All staff vacancies are filled using the Local Authority application process which contain requests for information relating to ethnicity, gender and disability. However, applicants can choose to indicate whether or not they wish to give this information. Information relating to an applicant's age is not collected as part of the initial recruitment process.

All information relating to staff is kept on the school's central personnel databases – Employee First as well as RM Integris.

We collect and analyse the following profile information for our staff:

- Applicants for employment (via recruitment application forms);
- Staff profile;
- Attendance at staff training events;
- Disciplinary and grievance cases – if any;
- Staff appraisals/performance management.

### **Admissions and Exclusions**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions are a last resort and will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. Each case will be treated individually and we will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

### **Consultation and Involvement**

It is a requirement that the development of the Action Plan is 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 annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-teacher structured conversation meetings;
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET (In Service Training);
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes and responses to self and school;
- Issues raised in annual reviews, PEP (Personal Education Plan) and CIN (Child In Need) meetings or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans as well feedback from other in school sources;
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings;
- School data.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this scheme and associated Action Plan.

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this scheme, and will ensure that staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the Governing Body.

The Headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this scheme.

Staff are expected to adhere to this policy and to attend any appropriate training as well as promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school. Staff are expected to challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond pro-actively and appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children, maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues and avoid the reinforcement of stereotyping.

Staff are also expected to plan and deliver lessons which adhere to the school's equality framework.

Staff will also provide and analyse quantitative and qualitative data that supports better understanding of any equality issues which might arise as well as undertaking and supporting all relevant equality impact assessment processes.

The pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to treat each other with respect, to feel valued and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.

The school will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school, including parents/carers, adhere to this commitment to equality.

### **Rights Respecting Schools**

The Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) recognises a school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice within the school and beyond

For a school to receive accreditation, it must evidence that it has reached the four standards of a Rights Respecting School. A school uses these standards and other guidance provided to plan and monitor progress.

There are four RRSA Standards:

#### **Standard A: Rights-respecting values underpin leadership and management**

The best interests of the child are a top priority in all actions. Leaders are committed to placing the values and principles of the CRC (Committee on the Rights of the Child) at the heart of all policies and practice.

#### **Standard B: The whole school community learns about the CRC**

The Convention is made known to children and adults. Young people and adults use this shared understanding to work for global justice and sustainable living.

### **Standard C: The school has a rights-respecting ethos**

Young people and adults collaborate to develop and maintain a rights-respecting school community, based on the CRC, in all areas and in all aspects of school life.

### **Standard D: Children and young people are empowered to become active citizens and learners**

Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously. Young people develop the confidence, through their experience of an inclusive rights-respecting school community, to play an active role in their own learning and to speak and act for the rights of all to be respected locally and globally.

This school successfully achieved Level 1 RRSA in January 2017. Level 2 is not considered appropriate for this school.

### **Annual Review of Progress**

The action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis during the Spring term by representatives of the staff and the Governing Body.

### **Ongoing Evolution of the Equality Action Plan**

We will continue to involve people from all aspects of our school community in the ongoing evolution of our actions. This includes:

- A regular item at School Council meetings to discuss equality and diversity issues;
- A regular item at staff meetings;
- School open days/evenings for the wider school community to celebrate the work of pupils and give the opportunity for feedback, including plays and performances;
- Regular reviews of the Equality Plan by the Governing Body.

### **Publishing the Equality Action Plan**

The Equality Action Plan will be made accessible to all persons within our local and school community in the following ways:

- Publication on the school website;
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff induction and meetings;
- Provide hard copies when requested.

### **Commissioning and Procurement**

Winchelsea School is required by law to ensure that when it purchases services from another organisation that it will comply with equality legislation.

### **Ensuring Equality of Opportunity and Participation**

The school will ensure that:

- An appropriate range of interventions and approaches will be adopted to uplift pupil attainment.
- Pupil achievement is monitored through a range of cohort groups including level of need, socio-economic groups, race, gender and disability.
- Where there are any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow attainment gaps, that appropriate actions are undertaken.
- All staff are aware of the school's Equality Action Plan.
- The talents of all pupils are recognised and celebrated.
- There is an inclusive approach to ensuring all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School Council, class assemblies, school performances, fund raising etc.
- All children can take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including educational visits and journeys.
- Extended school activities such as after-school clubs, holiday clubs take into account pupil needs and access issues and pupils attending reflect the diversity of the school population in terms of race, gender, disability and socio-economic status.
- Staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers will continue to be involved in the future development of the Equality Plan through input and feedback from surveys, staff meetings, School Council meetings, parents evenings etc.

The school will provide:

- Support for pupils who are under-achieving, in order to make progress in their learning and their personal well-being, i.e. ensuring that children with visual impairment have accessible texts, appropriate compensatory ICT (Information and Communications Technology) tools.
- Additional support for parents of under-achieving children (e.g. reporting progress, discussing needs).
- Additional support for disabled parents/carers and staff to help them to play a full part in the life of the school (e.g. providing a sign interpreter for a deaf parent; ensuring that meetings are held in the most accessible parts of the school to support wheelchair users).
- Additional support for parents (in the form of interpreters) for whom English is not their first language and where such parents do not have an adequate command of English.

### **Elimination of Discrimination and Harassment**

The school will:

- Develop and adapt its procedures on anti-bullying to include equality perspectives.
- Support staff to challenge and address any bullying and harassment that is based on a person's race, gender or ethnicity.
- Keep a record and report how these incidents are dealt with to the Governing Body and Local Authority on a termly basis.
- Review its approach to race, gender and disability bullying and harassment whenever it reviews its policy on behaviour.