

BISHOP WORDSWORTH'S SCHOOL

EQUALITIES POLICY

A Statutory Policy

Definitions:

1. *'Parent(s)' includes guardian(s) or any person who has parental responsibility for the pupil or who has care of the pupil.*
2. *'Is to', 'are to' and 'must' are obligatory. 'Should' is not obligatory but is good practice and is to be adhered to unless non-compliance can be justified.*

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1. The Governors of Bishop Wordsworth's School (the School) recognise their duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to disability, ethnic background, sex (i.e. gender), religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy/ maternity and, in relation to employment, age and marriage/civil partnership.
2. Governors recognise and act on all opportunities to promote community cohesion.
3. Governors recognise that these duties and intentions 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.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4. In fulfilling the legal obligations and our intentions cited above, the Governors are guided by nine principles:
5. **Principle 1 – Equal Value.** All pupils and staff are of equal value:
 - a. Whether or not they are disabled.
 - b. Whatever their ethnic background, culture, national origin or national status.
 - c. Whatever their gender.
 - d. Whatever their gender identity.
 - e. Whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background.
 - f. Whatever their sexual orientation.
6. **Principle 2 - Difference.** Governors recognise and respect difference. Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. The 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 prejudice that people may face, in relation to:
 - a. Disability, so that reasonable (in terms of cost and practicality) adjustments are made including the provision of 'auxiliary aids. 'Auxiliary aids' means aids and services. An aid is a piece of equipment eg: a special chair, adapted text or special computer equipment or software. A service is something people provide, such as personal assistance or (possibly) therapy.
 - b. Ethnic background/ Race, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised.

- c. Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of each gender are recognised.
- d. Religion, belief or faith background.
- e. Sexual orientation.
- f. Gender identity/ Gender Reassignment.
- g. Pregnancy/maternity.
- h. In relation to employment: age and marriage/civil partnership.

7. Principle 3 – Positive Attitudes. Governors foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. They intend that the School policies, procedures and activities will promote:

- a. Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people.
- b. Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnic background, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents.
- c. Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men and an absence of sexual, homophobic, and gender identity-based harassment.

8. Principle 4 – Equalities Practice. Governors observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. They intend that policies and procedures will all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- a. Whether or not they are disabled.
- b. Whatever their ethnic background, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status.
- c. Whatever their sex (gender) and sexual orientation.
- d. Whatever their gender identity.
- e. Regarding pregnancy/maternity, age and marriage/civil partnership.

9. Principle 5 – Reduction of Inequalities. Governors aim to reduce and remove any inequalities and barriers that already exist. In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, opportunities are taken to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist in relation to:

- a. Disabled and non-disabled people.
- b. People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds.
- c. Girls and boys, women and men.
- d. Sexual orientation.
- e. Gender identity.
- f. Pregnancy/maternity.
- g. In relation to employment: age and marriage/civil partnership.

10. Principle 6 – Consultation. Governors consult and involve widely. They engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of

existing ones. As appropriate, they consult and involve groups and individuals in relation to: disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), gender identity and ethnic background.

11. Principle 7 – Whole Society Benefit. Society as a whole should benefit. Governors intend that the 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 all groups and individuals in relation to: disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), gender identity, ethnic background and age.

12. Principle 8 – Evidence. Governors base their practices on sound evidence and information. They will monitor equality in relation to SEND, gender and ethnic background if the numbers become statistically significant.

13. Principle 9 – Objectives. Governors formulate and publish at least every four years, specific and measurable objective(s), based on the evidence collected and published (Principle 8). The objectives identified consider national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

THE CURRICULUM

14. Governors keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the relevant principles set out in the Guiding Principles above.

EXAMS

15. Exam Access Arrangements. Under the Equality Act all pupils are entitled to equality of opportunity in day-to-day activities including exams. Therefore access arrangements may be appropriate to help a candidate with a disability or learning difficulty to demonstrate in examinations their true skills, knowledge and understanding of the subjects. A 'learning difficulty' in this context will usually mean someone who has difficulty reading, writing or processing information. Pupils who have difficulty communicating what they know to the examiner are to be given an arrangement which will help them to access the examination. Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to the School, such as the use of a word processor, whereas others require prior JCQ awarding body approval. They are not to be granted if they will directly affect performance in the skills being assessed.

16. Examples. Examples of access arrangements are: the provision of a word processor in an exam for someone who has difficulty writing; extra time for someone who reads or writes at below average speed; modified papers for a student with a visual impairment.

17. Application. The pupil is to be assessed by a specialist teacher who holds a qualification in diagnostic assessment and exam access arrangements and application made if appropriate to the Joint Council for Qualifications. Parents are kept informed at each stage.

ETHOS AND ORGANISATION

18. Governors direct that the relevant principles described above apply to the full range of School policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- a. Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement.
- b. Pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being.
- c. Teaching styles and strategies.
- d. Admissions and attendance.

- e. Staff recruitment, retention and professional development.
- f. Care, guidance and support.
- g. Behaviour, discipline and exclusions.
- h. Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians.
- i. Working with the wider community.

ADDRESSING PREJUDICE AND PREJUDICE-RELATED BULLYING

19. Governors are opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3.

- a. Prejudice around disability and special educational needs.
- b. Prejudice around racism and xenophobia, including that directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum.
- c. Prejudice reflecting sexism and homophobia.
- d. Prejudice against gender identity issues.

20. The guidance in the staff handbook is to be followed on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

21. Governors understand their obligation to report regularly to the Local Authority the numbers, types and seriousness of racial related incidents at the school and how they are addressed.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

22. The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the School complies with legislation, and that this Policy and any related procedures and action plans are implemented.

23. A named governor is link governor for this Policy.

24. The Head is responsible for implementing the Policy; for ensuring that all staff are:

- a. Aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support.
- b. Taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.
- c. A senior member of staff has responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

25. All staff are to:

- a. Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom.
- b. Deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur.
- c. Plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the relevant principles in above
- d. Support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language.
- e. Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

26. This Policy is to be available to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents.

27. All staff and governors are to have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

28. The religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents are to be respected and there is to be compliance with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

29. All staff are to receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

BREACHES OF THE POLICY

30. Breaches of this Policy are to be dealt with as for other School policies, in accordance with the Staff Discipline Policy.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

31. Governors recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference. If an equalities action plan is considered necessary, it is reviewed annually within the framework of the overall School Improvement Plan and processes of self-evaluation. Equality objectives are kept under review and the progress towards achieving them is reported on annually.

32. Governors collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this Policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

FEATURES OF THIS POLICY:

33. The Policy contains the following features.

- a. The term 'ethnic background' is used in preference to 'race' or 'racial group' because it reflects better the intentions and concerns of race relations legislation.
- b. There are references where appropriate to religious affiliation and identity. There are references where appropriate to sexual identity and to challenging homophobia.
- c. The promotion of community cohesion is integrated into the policy, particularly but not only in the third of the nine principles.
- d. The phrasing at certain points reflects the specific duties required by the Equality Act 2010, in particular the duties to engage with interested groups and individuals (Principle 6), publish equality information (Principle 8), formulate and publish equality objectives (Principle 9).

CHANGES IN LEGISLATION

34. If, during the currency of this Policy, any statute or statutory instrument is enacted that adds to, modifies or is in conflict with any provisions of the Policy, then the Policy will be deemed to include any such statutory provision to the extent necessary to make the Policy compliant with that provision.

ADOPTION

35. This Policy was adopted by Governors on 17th November 2011 and is to be reviewed biennially. The most recent 3 years' review history is below:

16 th November 2021	Minor updates
5 th March 2024	Minor updates
25 th February 2025	Objectives (Annex A) updated; (policy not reviewed)

ANNEXES

- A. Equality Objectives.
- B. Equality Information.
- C. Accessibility Plan.

**EQUALITY OBJECTIVES
FROM FEBRUARY 2025**

Objective 1	To improve access to school buildings for those with physical disabilities.
Measurement	<p>2020/21: Ramps built at entrance/exit to Dining Room, Bishopgate and Chapel Block</p> <p>2021/22: Plans for Friary Block include lift access as standard</p> <p>2022/23: Ramp installed at exit from Sixth Form Block</p>
Objective 2	To foster good relations between all staff and students, irrespective of ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds.
Measurement	<p>The number of racial incidents logged:</p> <p>2018/19: 11</p> <p>2019/20: 8</p> <p>2020/21: 7</p> <p>2021/22: 15</p> <p>2022/23: 17</p>
Objective 3	To increase the number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
Measurement	<p>The number in school entitled to free school meals:</p> <p>2018/19: 18</p> <p>2019/20: 21</p> <p>2020/21: 26</p> <p>2021/22: 39</p> <p>2022/23: 43</p>
Objective 4	To eradicate discriminatory attitudes on the basis of gender, orientation or identity.
Measurement	<p>The number of sexual discriminatory incidents reported:</p> <p>2019/20: 0</p> <p>2020/21: 6 (sexual discriminatory); 8 (homophobic)</p> <p>2021/22: 1 (sexual discriminatory); 11 (homophobic)</p> <p>2022/23: 9 (sexual discriminatory); 6 (homophobic)</p>

Objective 5	To be a welcoming and inclusive workplace with equality of opportunity for all staff, attracting talent from wherever it comes.
Measurement	New objective

EQUALITY INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

1. **Information Requirements of the Act.** The Equality Act requires that information is published to demonstrate the School's compliance with the duty to have due regard for the three aims of the general duty. These three aims are:

- a. To eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- b. To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- c. To foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

2. **Aim.** The aim of this Annex is to describe how and where the information is published and how the School complies with the other requirements of the Act.

3. **Protected Characteristics.** The protected characteristics with notes as to how they relate to the School are:

- a. **Disability.** The School has a small number of pupils with sensory impairment.
- b. **Gender Reassignment.** The School has a very small (and varying) number of pupils whose gender assignment may change.
- c. **Pregnancy and Maternity.** This applies to female staff only.
- d. **Race.** There are currently approximately 21% of students and a few staff who identify as other than White British.
- e. **Religion or Belief.** The information provided voluntarily shows a small but significant number of pupils who belong to a variety of different faith groups, with a significant number reporting they have no religion.
- f. **Sex.** There are a significant number of female staff members. There are currently 31% female students in Year 12 and 25% female students in Year 13, following the move to a co-educational Sixth Form in September 2020.
- g. **Sexual Orientation.** The School is not aware of any sexual orientation that differs from the statistical norm.
- h. **Age.** The Act applies this characteristic to staff only.
- i. **Marriage & Civil Partnership.** The Act applies this characteristic to staff only.

THE GENERAL DUTY

4. The three requirements at Sub-paragraph 1 are met as follows:

- a. By appropriate implicit or explicit references within the suite of general policies that are advised to new staff, published within the School and published on the Website. These policies are reviewed by the staff Leadership Team annually and then approved by governors. The relevant policies are:

Admissions

Appraisal Professional Support Staff
 Assessment, Recording, Marking Feedback & Reporting
 Behaviour
 Child Protection
 Collective Worship
 Equality
 Freedom of Information Act (FOI)
 FOI Publication Scheme
 Harassment
 Induction of New Staff
 Pastoral Care
 Performance Management
 Personal, Social, Health Education
 Religious Education
 SEN
 Relationships and Sex Education
 SMSC
 Staff Discipline and Grievance
 Staff Pay
 Whistleblowing.

- b. By 6th Form citizenship conferences which are attended by various special interest groups.
- c. By Religious Education (which includes study of comparative religions) being compulsory from Year 7 to Year 11.
- d. By the maintenance of a specialist learning support department.
- e. By allowing non-Christians (in this Christian School) to be withdrawn from Christian worship and to worship as their faith requires.

EQUALITY ANALYSIS

5. The Act requires that an equality analysis be conducted to establish whether its policies and practices will, or have, furthered the three equality aims in the general equality duty. The format of the analysis is described in Paragraphs 6 and 7 below.

6. Biennially, both pupils and parents in years 7, 10 and 12 are invited to complete separate questionnaires with wide ranging questions several of which are relevant to the analysis of equality. This analysis is considered by the School's Leadership Team and by governors and any appropriate action taken.

7. Every three years staff are invited to complete a questionnaire which contains some questions relevant to equality. The analysis of the completed questionnaire is considered by the Leadership Team and governors.

EQUALITY ANALYSIS IMPACT

8. **Information to be Published.** The Act requires that schools publish information on the effect that its policies and practices have had on employees, pupils and others from the protected groups. This information should be broken down by protected group. Governors believe that the ethos of the school has always been inclusive and non-discriminatory and this is evidenced by the lack of complaints/ comments in this area. Therefore the only information that can be published is that the policies and practices have resulted in a non-discriminatory environment that is in accordance with the Act. Moreover, it can be seen from the comments on the protected characteristics at Paragraph 3 that the only characteristics where there can be any statistical significance relate to staff and are

for Sex, Age and Marriage & Civil Partnership. Action on these characteristics is covered at Paragraph 9 below.

9. **Workforce Equality.** Nearly all teacher and support staff policies and practices are bound by national agreements and therefore are considered equality compliant. Additionally, all staff advertising and recruiting is carried out in conformance with the Act. There are also regular staff questionnaires as described in Paragraph 7 above.

10. **Executive Monitoring.** Governors are aware of their duties under the Act as they review and re-adopt all policies annually. This review is minuted and recorded on each policy. They would be made aware of any complaints, take appropriate action and monitor the outcome.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

AIM

1. The aim of this plan is to:
 - a. Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum.
 - b. Improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.
 - c. Improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.
 - d. Improve the physical environment of the School to increase access by disabled staff, parents or other stakeholders.

CURRICULUM

2. All disabled pupils whether subject to permanent or temporary (e.g. a broken leg) disablement will be assessed to ascertain if their disability limits participation in the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. Adjustments, extra facilities etc. will then be proposed and implemented provided they are within reasonable limits of expense and practicability regarding disruption to other pupils and the efficient and effective deployment of staff resources.

PHYSICAL ACCESS

3. Access to the different areas of the school site varies according to the age and design of the buildings concerned. All new buildings are constructed so that there are no barriers to access by disabled people. It is not reasonable for all parts of all of the older building at BWS to be made fully accessible for disabled people so, where there is an issue, appropriate adjustments will be made either through flexibility of timetabling or through physical adjustments as the need arises (ramps, meeting locations etc.). Any new development and/or refurbishment will take wheelchair access into account.

DELIVERY

4. There are various strategies for delivery dependant on the type of disability. Each disabled pupil will be assessed by the SEND Coordinator and a reasonable (regarding cost and practicability) strategy proposed and discussed with the appropriate member of the Leadership Team. The agreed strategy will then be delivered, reviewed regularly and amended as appropriate.