



Willowcroft Community School

**Equality Policy**

**January 2024 to 2026**

## Introduction

Willowcroft Community School welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010. We work towards building a culture that values diversity and equality, by recognising and appreciating individual needs and differences. The Act provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. The school will regularly review admission policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory either in intention or effect.

### The purpose and direction of the school's scheme

At Willowcroft Community School we are committed to establishing equality for all pupils, their parents, staff and other users of the school. As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

- eliminate discrimination,
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

This scheme and the accompanying action plans set out how the governing body will make special effort to promote equality of opportunity for all, including attention to:

- Boys and girls, men and women
- All minority ethnic groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers
- Pupils or families with different religions or beliefs
- Pupils and others with special educational needs
- Pupils and others with a range of disabilities
- Children looked after and their carers
- Children or staff who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual
- Pupils or staff who are pregnant or have just given birth
- Pupils or staff undergoing gender reassignment

This scheme incorporates the school's plans to allow positive action and access to education for all pupils. It applies to the school and breakfast and after school club. The school recognises that new Positive Action provisions in the Equalities Act 2010 allow us to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. If we decide to use these we will ensure that it is a proportionate response to achieve the relevant aim. We understand the principle of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity. It is the responsibility of the whole school community to implement this scheme in a manner which promotes the inclusive ethos of our school.

The school has identified the following issues that may be barriers to effective learning and successful working at the school:

- Low self-esteem, low expectations and peer group pressure
- Experience of bullying, harassment or social exclusion
- Low income leading to difficulty in participating in some aspects of school life and no adequate home study space
- Low parental support or different parental expectations
- Frequent moves and lack of stability in life leading to time out of school or low attendance
- Lack of help with emotional, mental & physical well-being and poor behaviour including exclusions
- Language difficulties
- Special Educational Needs
- Lack of physical access to school facilities or services
- Recruitment, management and development of staff and governors

Under the Equality Act, schools have a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for people with disabilities.

The departmental advice document summarises the duty as follows:

- Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils, then the school must take reasonable steps to try to avoid that disadvantage
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils

The Public Sector Equality Duty PSED replaces three separate duties (to promote disability, race, and gender equality) that public bodies were previously bound by, with one single duty covering all the protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

Public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The school will publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED and equality objectives (Appendix 1 and 2). The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) explains that under the Equality Act, schools may (but are not required to) take proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils.

## 5 Planning for Action 5.1

The priorities for the school's scheme are set in the light of:

- an examination of the information that the school gathers;
- the feedback that the school has gained from the pupils, staff and parents who have been involved in any developments

- an assessment of the impact of current policies on equality.

5.2 This is a working document: any urgent action necessary following updates/new entries will be added to the action plan before the review date.

5.3 In writing our action plan, we have addressed the general duties to:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate discrimination
- Eliminate harassment
- Promote positive attitudes
- Encourage participation in public life
- Take steps to meet all people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment (positive action).

## 6 Annual Reporting

6.1 Schools report annually on the progress being made to promote equality of opportunity to all. Annual reporting will bring together details of:

- Feedback gathered during the year
- Action points completed during the year and those that are ongoing.
- This report will be included in the headteacher's report to governors and will be published in the minutes.

## 7 Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation of the Action Plan

7.1 The implementation of the Action Plan will be overseen by the governing body. A report will be made to the governors periodically through the year by the headteacher.

7.2 The Action plan is part of the School Development Plan (RAP).

7.3 The evaluation of the effectiveness of our scheme will be reflected in our discussions with our external advisers, with the local authority (where necessary) and with Ofsted when the school is inspected.

7.4 Measures of achievement of pupils with specific needs will form part of our evaluation of the effectiveness of our scheme.

## 8 Publication of the Scheme

8.1 Our scheme is available on the school website and to anyone on request at the school office.

## 9 Review and Revision of the Scheme

9.1 The Scheme will be reviewed involving all relevant stakeholders.

## Action Plan

| Priority   | Responsible Person (s) | Action  | Required Timescale                    | Date & process of review              | Success Criteria   |
|--|------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Ensure full access to the school and facilities is maintained  | HT/Site Managers       | Any changes to the building / facilities are evaluated for access               | Termly review or when premises change | Termly or when premises changes occur | Access is as full as practically possible.   |
| Ensure that children with disabilities are fully included within the school and that outcomes apply equally to them. | HT/SLT/SENCo           | Children with disabilities are fully included in the school evaluation process. | Risk Assess when they arrive          | Ongoing                               | Evaluation indicates that children feel safe, are happy, motivated and well behaved. |
| Ensure that the progress of children with disabilities is as rapid as possible                                       | HT/SLT/SENCo           | Pupil progress data analysed on an individual / SEN group basis. Termly         | Termly                                | Pupil progress focus termly           | Children with disabilities meet their targets  |
| Ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination of children, parents, staff, governors or visitors.                  | HT/SLT/SENCo           | Monitoring of relevant school policies eg admissions, recruitment.              | Ongoing                               | Review in FGB standing item           | Willowcroft Community School is a fully inclusive school.                            |