

## WHITWORTH COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

Draft

# EQUALITIES POLICY

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Date approved by Governors:	
Date of review:	
Prepared by:	Model LCC policy personalised for the school by P Dugdale

# Whitworth Community High School Equalities Policy

## Statement of Principles

The policy outlines the commitment of the staff, students and governors of Whitworth Community High 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 tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of students in school, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community.

These include:

- Students
- 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.

At Whitworth Community High School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

Ofsted, in their inspection in December 2014 stated that: *“Students achieved well across the school”, “Teachers’ secure knowledge, and often great enthusiasm for their subject, helps students enjoy learning and make improving progress over time”.*

In their inspection in December 2015, Ofsted stated that: *In a recent survey of parents of Year 7 pupils, 97% of those who had contacted school with a query or problem said that they had received a helpful response. Parental comments in the school’s visitors’ book are also extremely positive. They comment on how very welcoming the school is and on the professionalism of staff. The pastoral staff receive particularly high praise from parents”.*

Our Mission Statement “**Climbing Higher**”, underpins our entire ethos and promotes equality for all stakeholders and visitors involved in our school community.

### **Statutory requirements**

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 students)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex; and Sexual orientation

The Act introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PESD), 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 equality objectives.

In light of the specific duties our school will publish and review annually appropriate information. We will also prepare and publish equality objectives that will be outcome focused.

### **School in Context**

Whitworth Community High School is a smaller-than-average secondary school. Most students are of White British heritage and very few are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The school's population is stable. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals

is higher than average. The school was built in the 1960's and has some issues with access for users with mobility issues. The main teaching block is a more recent addition and has a lift. An accessibility plan was carried out in November 2016 and an Accessibility Policy was published in November 2016.

Restrictions to access are in the following areas:

- The school hall
- The science classrooms
- The lower floor of the Technology area

*(We have identified this as an area for improvement)*

### **Ethos and atmosphere**

- At Whitworth Community High School, the leadership of the school community will demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community.
- There is an openness of atmosphere, which welcomes everyone to the school and is underpinned by our mission statement.
- All within the school community will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour, e.g. through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions.
- All students are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect.
- The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored.
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

### **Community Profile**

Whitworth Community High School draws students from Rochdale and Lancashire LEA's. Compared with the England average, Whitworth residents are relatively less affluent, and have below average levels of education attainment. A more detailed description of the community profile can be found on the "**My Lancashire**" web site:

[http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/office\\_of\\_the\\_chief\\_executive/lancashireprofile/misc/deprivation.asp?a=ro&d=multi#FX](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/office_of_the_chief_executive/lancashireprofile/misc/deprivation.asp?a=ro&d=multi#FX)

### **Policy Development**

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:

- Staff
- Students
- Parents/Carers

## **Monitoring and Review**

Whitworth Community is an inclusive school, working towards greater equality in the whole school community. 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 their potential.

We collect and analyse a range of profile information for our staff and governors:

1. The gap in outcomes at A\* - A / Grades 7+ between girls and boys in all subjects
2. The gap in outcomes for our disadvantaged students in all subjects  
In order to analyse data in school with regard to equality (specifically sex, disability, ethnicity and disadvantaged students)

Through these measures, regard is given to the promotion of equality in the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) and the school Improvement Plan (SIP). The person responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of this policy is Mr Dugdale (Assistant Headteacher).

His role is to:

- Work with Assistant Headteacher (Data and Assessment) to organise training, update staff in staff meetings, support discussions
- Work with the governing body on matters relating to equality
- Support evaluation activities that moderate the impact and success of this policy

## **Developing Best Practice**

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in student performance and provide specific support and intervention as required, including pastoral support. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups in order to make necessary improvements.

Whitworth Community High School is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. We 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. All job applications are made via LCC application forms and contain relevant sections relating to equality.

Whitworth Community constantly strives to develop best practice in all areas by encouraging staff to engage in initiatives that benefit the whole learning community. These range across every aspect of our work and include sporting and academic opportunities as well as community projects

## **Teaching and Learning**

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

- Provide equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Use materials to promote a positive image of and attitude towards disability and disabled people
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour and provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- Develop students advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity;
- All subject leaders' departments, where appropriate, promote and celebrate the contribution of different cultures to the subject matter
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that
- involve all student groups
- Take account of the performance of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of students
- Identify resources and training that support staff development

## **Learning Environment**

There is a consistently high expectation of all students regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. All students are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

- Teacher planning and delivery is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all students
- Adults in the school will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity
- We place high on the provision for special educational needs and disability.

- We will meet all students' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work
- We provide an environment in which all students have equal access to all facilities and resources
- All students are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning
- A range of teaching methods are to be used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all students
- Consideration will be given to the physical learning environment – both internal and external, including displays and signage

## **Curriculum**

At Whitworth Community High School, we aim to ensure that:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity
- Students will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- Steps are taken to ensure that all students have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural, backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles
- All students have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression

## **Resources and Materials**

The provision of good quality resources and materials within Whitworth Community High School is a high priority. These resources should:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints
- Show positive images of males and females in society
- Include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Be accessible to all members of the school community

## **Language**

We recognise that it is important at Whitworth Community High School that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- Does not offend
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- Uses accurate language in referring to particular groups or individuals and challenges in instances where this is not the case

## **Extended Learning Opportunities**

It is the policy of this school to 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 leaders and helpers, coach drivers) by signposting them to guidelines drawn from this policy.

We try to ensure that all such non-staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines.

## **Provision for Bi-lingual Students**

At Whitworth Community High School we make appropriate provision for all EAL/bi-lingual students to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Students for whom English is an additional language
- Students who are new to the United Kingdom
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children
- Advanced bi-lingual learners
- Use first language effectively for learning

## **Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance**

- Staff take account of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker students
- All students are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender, race or sexual orientation (whilst acknowledging that a disability may impose some practical boundaries to some career aspirations)
- All students/staff/parents/carers are given support and guidance, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination
- We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support.
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of students can see themselves reflected in the school community
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

## **Staffing and Staff Development**

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.

- This must include students' access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible

- We encourage the career development and aspirations of all school staff
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of students
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which enables them to confidently carry out their roles and responsibilities in relation to equality

### **Staff Recruitment**

- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions
- All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact

#### ***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 permissible, 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.

### **Partnerships with Parents/Carers/Families and the Wider Community**

We will work with parents/carers to help all students to achieve their potential.

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the school.
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in school activities
- Exploring the possibility of the school having a role to play in supporting new and settled communities

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- Our governing body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan
- The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and will ensure that staff are aware of their 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 policy
- Our staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues
- All members of the school community have a responsibility 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
- We will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school adhere to our commitment to equality

### **Commissioning and Procurement**

Whitworth Community High School will ensure that we buy services from organisations that comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in any tendering process.

### **Measuring the Impact of this Policy**

This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on students, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. An action plan will be published to enable an impact assessment to be undertaken at the appropriate time within a given timescale.

### **Publicising our Policy and Plan**

Our equality policy and action plan is available on our school website and available, free of charge, to all members of school and the wider community in printed form on request.

### **Annual Review of Progress**

We are legally required to report annually on our progress and performance in respect of our policy covering ethnicity, disability and gender and to report annually on our progress to improve access for disabled students, including access to the curriculum, physical access and access to information. Taking this single equality approach, we will incorporate all requirements into one annual report, which meets the requirements of the new legislation and which will formulate the basis for the annual action plan.

### **Equality Impact analysis**

We will undertake an equality impact analysis (EIA) to predict and assess what the implications of this policy, function or strategy will have on a wide range of people. This is to ensure it meets the needs of all our service users and that no group (in relation the ethnicity, disability, gender, age, religion and

belief, and sexual orientation) is disadvantaged or cannot access our services.

Our objectives and action plan will inform our impact analysis with an aim of making sure no group (in relation to ethnicity, disability, gender, age, religion and belief, and sexual orientation) is disadvantaged or cannot access our services.

This policy will be evaluated for its impact on students, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. In line with legislative requirements, we will review our published equalities information annually and evaluate the impact of actions taken against our published objectives. The objectives will be published at least once every four years.

## **Whitworth Community High School Objectives 2017 - 2018**

### **Objective A**

- Gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students progress closed to below 10% in all subject areas and in all year groups OR rapidly closing where the current gap is significantly wider.
- Students, especially vulnerable contextual groups, demonstrate high achievement with progress measures at least at expected progress.
- Further develop the role of the Pupil Premium Academic Mentor to maximise progress of disadvantaged students to ensure they close the gap between this group and more advantaged students.
- School target setting methods show challenging targets for all disadvantaged students to ensure they have the challenge of closing gaps that may have developed during their primary school years.

### **Objective B**

- Teachers will ensure that specific students such as those eligible for Pupil Premium are suitably supported through SAM (identify on **S**eating plan, **A**sk a question, **M**ark their work) in order to close the progress gap.  
Directors of Learning will monitor impact through lesson observation and outcomes.

### **Objective C**

- Attendance of all students will be improved, with particular focus on closing the existing gaps between contextual groups. We will compare the previous year attendance with how students have started the first half term.
- Referrals to AIM will occur where no significant improvements seen.
- Priority will be given to PP students in scheduling of interviews. The Pupil Premium Academic Mentor will be involved in Pupil Premium interviews.

## **Objective D**

- Promote further appreciation and tolerance of other faiths, sexuality, abilities, and socio-economic differences. This will be done through assemblies, PSHE lessons, tutor activities and curricular content.

## **Objective E**

- Directors of Learning will deliver presentations in September 2017 to include academic information on contextual groups and how plans will enable any gaps to be closed.
- Middle Leadership meetings in the core subjects will focus on progress across all subjects and contextual groups.

## **Objective F**

- The Pupil Premium Academic Mentor will work with disadvantaged students on aspiration. Small group and individual mentoring will allow these disadvantaged students to raise the bar and aim for their own aspirations.

## **Race**

The term race includes colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin and citizenship as well as race.

### **Reporting racist incidents in school**

Schools in Lancashire are required to have in place a procedure for dealing with and reporting racist incidents, which includes providing an annual summary of racist incidents to Lancashire County Council. This is included in the information provided to the governing body by the Headteacher.

## **Disability**

### **What is a disability?**

Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be:

- substantial (more than minor or trivial)
- adverse
- long-term (it has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least a year or for the rest of the life of the person affected).

There is no need for a person to have a specific, medically-diagnosed cause for their impairment – what matters is the effect of the impairment, not the cause.

Examples include hearing or sight impairments, a significant mobility difficulty, mental health conditions or learning difficulties. There are many other types of condition, illness or injury that can result in a person being disabled (eg diabetes, asthma, cancer, arthritis, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, heart conditions, facial disfigurement).

## **Gender**

The term gender includes boys, girls, men and women, and transgender/transsexual people. Sexual orientation is a distinct protected characteristic. (The term transgender refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender).

### **What is the difference between sex and gender?**

- Sex refers to biological status as male or female. It includes physical attributes such as sex chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, internal reproductive structures, and external genitalia.
- Gender is a term that is often used to refer to ways that people act, interact, or feel about themselves, which are associated with boys/men and girls/women. While aspects of biological sex are the same across different cultures, aspects of gender may not be.

## **Sexual Orientation**

Heterosexism is any prejudice and discrimination against individuals and groups who are lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) or are perceived to be so. It is based on the assumption that everyone is or should be heterosexual. Expressions of dislike, contempt or fear based on heterosexism are usually known as homophobia, although lesophobia and biphobia are also coming into use. Whether through institutional practice or personal behaviour, the prevalence of heterosexism is likely to mean that LGB people feel excluded and unsafe. This effect can be mitigated by an actively welcoming and supportive environment. Sexual orientation is defined as an individual's sexual orientation towards people of the same sex as her or him (gay or lesbian), people of the opposite sex (heterosexual) or people of both sexes (bisexual).

## **Transgenderism and gender re-assignment**

Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from that usually associated with their birth sex. Gender reassignment is the process a transgender person goes through to change sex.

Teaching staff have received training on LGBT+ awareness, and students have been taught about the Equality Act through assemblies. The school behaviour policy includes sanctions for acting in a hurtful way against a person based on their sex or gender.

The school is currently working towards the Rainbow Flag Award as part of its work on equality and diversity.

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