



Equality Policy

A Woodbridge Trust Policy

Firwood School

**This policy will be reviewed every 4 years
Reviewed September 2024**

Version Control

Current version	Previous version	Summary of changes made
01 Sep 24	01 Apr 13	Removed reference to policies no longer in use. Updated policy titles and links. Formatting of paragraphs and headings standardised.
September 2024	July 2017	Updated entire policy. Added the following sections Aims, Roles and responsibilities, Equality considerations in decision making, equality objectives, monitoring arrangements.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Woodbridge Trust is a diverse organisation, where people from many different backgrounds and cultures work together. This trust and its partners have a longstanding commitment to celebrating this diversity, promoting good relations between our diverse communities, and ensuring that its services are appropriate and accessible for everyone.
- 1.2 We want Woodbridge Trust to be a place where every child and young person is able to achieve their potential, regardless of their background, their circumstances, or where they live.
- 1.3 Woodbridge Trust welcomes the [Equality Act 2010](#), which restates the important role that we all play in tackling inequality and building strong and confident communities. This policy statement describes how Woodbridge Trust responds to the requirements of the [Equality Act 2010](#).
- 1.4 This policy sets out our approach to equality and the equality objectives for Woodbridge Trust. Section 9 sets out the equality objectives for Firwood School

2 Aims

- 2.1 Woodbridge Trust aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having 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
- 2.2 Our trust aims to promote respect for difference and diversity in accordance with our values: **Kindness – Respect - Integrity**.

3 Scope and definition

- 3.1 This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:
- 3.2 The [Equality Act 2010](#) ('the act') introduced the public sector equality duty and provides protection against discrimination for the following range of diversity groups and protected characteristics;
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Sex or gender
 - Gender reassignment
 - Sexual orientation
 - Religion or belief

- Pregnancy and maternity
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Race (including ethnic or national origins; colour; nationality)
- 3.3 [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#) which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives
- 3.4 This document is also based on the [Department for Education \(DfE\) advice for schools on the Equality Act](#), the [technical guidance for schools from the Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) and [guidance from the Government Equalities Office on meeting the specific duties that support the public sector equality duty](#)
- 3.5 In addition to the protected characteristics set out by the act, Woodbridge Trust believes it is also important to consider caring status and socio-economic conditions as part of its work around equality.
- 3.6 This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The board of trustees

The board of trustees will:

- Ensure that the equality information as set out in this statement is published and communicated throughout the trust, including to local governors, staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher and Local Governing Board.

4.2 The local governing body

The local governing bodies will, for their schools:

- Meet with the designated member of staff for equality every term, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
- Ensure they are familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
- Report back to the full board of trustees regarding any issues

4.3 The headteacher

The headteacher will, for their school:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils

- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

4.4 **The designated member of staff for equality**

The designated member of staff for equality will, for their school:

- Support the headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Meet with the local governing body of their school every term to raise and discuss any issues.
- Support the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

4.5 **All staff across the trust**

All staff across the trust are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 9.

5 **Eliminating discrimination**

5.1 The trust is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

5.2 As an employer, we strive to create a culture where diversity is respected and celebrated. We aim to;

- Ensure that all of our policies and processes are fair and help to advance opportunity between staff from all groups.
- Reaffirm that effective leadership and operational delivery on equality matters is a core competency for the leadership team; and ensure that they are aware of and have the training and information they need to fulfil their obligations under equality legislation.
- Ensure that all staff have the appropriate training to support and respect the differing needs of our diverse communities. This is particularly important for those staff members who are working with vulnerable pupils, and those at risk of social exclusion.
- Have a workforce which is broadly representative of the local population in the long-term.
- Seek to ensure that our workforce is representative across all levels, including the highest tiers.
- Create an environment in which employees from across the range of protected characteristics feel satisfied with and supported in their work.

5.3 Woodbridge Trust's equality duties include eliminating discrimination through the application of a robust policy framework that underpins our roles as employer and service provider.

5.4 Our policies are clear about eliminating discrimination in the workplace by ensuring that fair and equal opportunity is afforded to staff from all groups and that individuals have recourse to an objective Panel hearing, if necessary, to test any issue of fairness in relation to conduct, treatment or behaviour at work.

- 5.5 Further, all matters relating to employment terms and conditions are determined in consultation with the recognised Trades' Unions through a system of collective bargaining, which ensures that matters of collective equity are addressed from inception.
- 5.6 Those policies which are most pertinent to equalities matters are listed below;
- [Code of Conduct](#)
 - [Dismissal and Disciplinary Policy](#)
 - [Domestic Violence Policy](#)
 - [Flexible Working Policy](#)
 - [Grievance Policy](#)
 - [Leave of Absence Policy](#)
 - [Managing Capability Policies](#)
 - [Managing Sickness Absence Policy](#)
 - [Maternity Policy](#)
 - [Paternity Policy](#)
 - [Shared Parental Leave Pay Policy](#)
 - [Redundancy Policy](#)
 - [Whistleblowing Policy](#)
- 5.7 Trustees, local governors and all staff are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.
- 5.8 Each school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and local governors aware of these as appropriate.
- 5.9 As a Trust, our services are based on a firm and objective understanding of pupil's needs and the recognition that, while we would expect all pupils to receive an equitable standard of service, different pupils will have differing needs and requirements.

6 Advancing equality of opportunity

- 6.1 As an employer, Woodbridge Trust has an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity in employment, both as an individual employer; and as a member of the employer community in Bolton.
- 6.2 Within the workplace, we believe that having an organisational culture where diversity is respected and supported is essential. We aim to provide a comprehensive package of training around equalities matters for all our managers, built into our package of essential skills and knowledge for those in leadership roles.
- 6.3 As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the trust aims to advance equality of opportunity by:
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected by a particular characteristic they have
 - Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic

- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities

7 Fostering good relations

- 7.1 Woodbridge Trust has an important role in the community, and fostering good relations is a central part of our work to build community and social cohesion in the local area. Engaging effectively with our communities is central to our success, since this helps us to understand the issues which are of importance to our communities.
- 7.2 The trust aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:
- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of the curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas.
 - Making sure schools work with their local community. This includes organising school trips and activities based around the local community

8 Equality considerations in decision-making

- 8.1 The trust ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.
- 8.2 In all of our schools, we will always consider the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:
- Cuts across any religious holidays
 - Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
 - Has equivalent facilities for all pupils irrespective of their gender
- 8.3 Schools will keep a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show they have actively considered our equality duties and asked relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is recorded and stored electronically on the completed risk assessment.

9 Equality Objectives

- 9.1 Woodbridge Trust overarching equality objectives are:
- To review staff related policies and procedures to ensure they comply with the Act.
 - To recognise and tackle any form of inappropriate bias or stereotyping.

- To provide training for all staff and governors on equality and diversity.
- To ensure that all pupils receive a broad range of learning opportunities and experiences through our curriculum and through additional offers for all.

9.2 Firwood School Approach

Policy and Procedure Review

- Regularly audit school policies to ensure alignment with the Equality Act 2010 and best practice.
- Include equality impact assessments, where appropriate, for new and reviewed policies and reviews of the curriculum.

Staff and Governor Development

- Embed equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in CPD programmes.
- Offer specific training on inclusive practices.

Inclusive Curriculum and Enrichment

- Embed diverse voices, histories, and perspectives into the curriculum.
- Promote inclusive extracurricular opportunities accessible to all pupils.

Student Voice and Participation

- Actively seek and incorporate input from pupils on issues of equality and inclusion.
- Establish student councils and student-led initiatives.

Community and Parental Engagement

- Strengthen partnerships with families from diverse backgrounds.
- Share information and guidance in accessible formats for all parents and carers.

Data Monitoring and Targeted Action

- Monitor attainment, behaviour, and participation data across different groups (e.g., by SEND area of need, gender, ethnicity).
- Use data to inform interventions and reduce gaps.

Representation and Role Modelling

- Promote diverse role models through displays, assemblies, visitors, and school materials.
- Ensure recruitment and promotion practices encourage a diverse staff body.

9.3 Firwood School objectives

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and other prohibited conduct.

- Ensuring the school's behaviour policy addresses prejudicial bullying.
- Monitoring and responding to racist incidents.
- Regularly monitoring the curriculum to ensure it's inclusive and challenges negative stereotypes.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.
- To foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who don't.
- To ensure all children are genuinely included with regard to protective characteristics, including those with SEND.
- Promoting self-efficacy:
 - To promote self-efficacy, ambition, and opportunity for all children.
- Addressing attendance:
 - To embed the importance of good attendance to secure equality of opportunity for pupil engagement, attainment, and progress.
- Recognizing and respecting difference:
 - To foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.
- Observing good equality practice:
 - To observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention, and development.

10 Monitoring arrangements

- 10.1 This document will be reviewed and approved by the board of trustees at least every 4 years.
- 10.2 Trust specific equality objectives will be reviewed by the CEO at least every 4 years and approved by the board of trustees
- 10.3 School-specific equality objectives will be reviewed by the Headteacher at least every 4 years and approved by the local governing body.