



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Woodlands Academy of Learning Governors have agreed to adopt Education Walsall model Equal Opportunities Policy.

1. Equal Opportunities Statement of Commitment

Woodlands Academy of Learning is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief.

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual's self esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated.

We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated.

We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community.

Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of Equal Opportunities in the context of the schools' ethos and values. In particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the Policy.

All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the schools' Equal Opportunities Policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the Policy.

2. Aims and Objectives

The school through its Equal Opportunities Policy aims to:

- Carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation (including the Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Employment Equality Regulations)
- Reinforce the school's position as a provider of high quality education, and as a good employer providing development opportunities
- Ensure that quality remains high on the school's strategic agenda
- Establish good people management practice and to set out a proactive agenda in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organisational response
- Achieve a staffing composition that reflects the composition of the wider community
- Ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil
- Ensure that pupils and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals
- Ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's equal opportunities policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (eg complaints relating to staff may be investigated either under the Disciplinary, Grievance or Anti Harassment Procedure as appropriate). All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable.

3. Policy and Planning

Equal opportunities implications, including race equality, will be considered and recorded whenever school policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide a comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation.

4. Employment matters

Appointments: In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria.

Family friendly policies: The school is a family friendly employer and will do its best to respond to the changing needs of all staff by publicising existing schemes designed to support employees in combining work and other

responsibilities (parental leave arrangements, job share opportunities, flexi-time where appropriate, carers leave provision)

HIV/AIDS: The School and Governing Body recognises that people with AIDS or HIV, which leads to the condition, suffer not only from the purely medical effects of the infection but may also experience prejudice and misunderstanding leading to unfair discrimination and victimisation. The School and Governors therefore will ensure that people with AIDS or HIV do not experience unfair treatment in relation to employment, as pupils or as other members of the school community. The School and governing Body will follow the detailed guidelines regarding staff recruitment and pupil admissions set out in Appendix B of Education Walsall Equal Opportunities: Guidelines.

Transsexual employees and gender reassignment: The Sex Discrimination Act now expressly covers discrimination on grounds of 'gender reassignment'.

5. Training and Development

The success of the Equal Opportunities Policy is closely linked to the provision of relevant training. Governors will be encouraged to take up all relevant opportunities provided by the Governors Training Programme.

The school will endeavour to:

- Enhance and develop the skills knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential irrespective of background or employment status
- Provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, on the basis of their assessed training needs
- Promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, Governors, parents/guardians and pupils can make
- Equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions discriminatory practices and behaviour and to promote anti-discriminatory behaviour generally

Professional development involves a continuous process of learning involving self development, encouragement and motivation. The school places great importance on the relationship between team leaders and their teams and will ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own learning and development in the context of the school's performance management system.

6. Pupils and the Curriculum

The school follows LEA and/or Governing Body pupil admission policies that do not permit sex, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission.

The school's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnic origin.

The Education Reform Act 1988 stated that 'the school curriculum should reflect the culturally diverse society to which pupils belong and of which they will become adult members'. Pupils should have access to a broad balanced curriculum, which avoids stereotypes and provides good role models for all pupils. Equality of opportunity should inform the whole of the curriculum and be reviewed regularly.

Equal opportunities issues will be taken account of in planning the curriculum. This should be reflected in curriculum planning documentation.

7. Internal Managerial Issues

These guidelines are primarily designed to address employment aspects of Governance and Management. However, in consulting on the policy and developing it further Headteachers and members of the Senior Management Team will wish to take a range of other internal issues into account. Many of the issues listed will already be the subject of detailed agreed policies. These existing policies will be 'audited' from an equal opportunities perspective:

- Classroom organisation
- Expectations
- Resources
- Parental involvement
- Cultural diversity of family background
- Arrangement of sport, music etc
- Assemblies and celebrations
- Diet
- Bilingualism
- Use of language
- Special Needs
- Abusive behaviour by pupils