

# The Willows School Academy Trust

*The Willows School Academy Trust*



*Learning, Achieving, Succeeding*

## Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (Including Equality Objectives)

Review: October 2024

Next Review: October 2025

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## *Introduction*

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The Willows School Academy Trust is committed to promoting equal opportunities, valuing diversity and tackling social exclusion. We aim to equip children with an awareness of our diverse society and to appreciate the value of difference. All policy principles are within national guidelines and legislation.

At The Willows every child matters irrespective of his/her creed, culture, class, race, gender, sexuality and/or disability.

Every aspect of The Willows School activity has an equal opportunities dimension. This may be expressed explicitly in teaching materials and display, implicitly in classroom practice, or as part of the 'hidden curriculum' of social interaction amongst and between staff and children.

The Willows School's environment influences the developing attitudes of the children within it and can be a powerful vehicle for the promotion of understanding and practice of equal opportunities.

We live in a society where disability discrimination segregates and isolates people from their communities. The Willows School aims through its proactive approach of inclusion to enable all children to an equality of access to The Willows School community. Addressing fundamental prejudices against disability in both children and adults is a core 'hidden' element of our inclusion work.

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## *Characteristics of School*

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The Willows School is situated in the London Borough of Hillingdon. It draws its students from a very local catchment area within an approximately 1.7 mile radius of the school. The Willows School is a small school academy. Students who join the school come from many different primary schools and other local authorities.

Most students come from white heritage backgrounds. The percentage of students from minority ethnic groups has increased. When students start at the school, their attainment is broadly below national average; this is evidenced by the data provided from KS2 tests.

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### *The Context of the policy*

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The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act.

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### *Aim*

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The Willows School aims to foster a sense of community in which all students and staff are valued and can thrive, regardless of:

**Disability**

**Gender reassignment**

**Pregnancy and maternity**

**Race**

**Religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief)**

**Gender**

**Sexual orientation and (in the case of adult members of the Academy Community)**

**Marital or civil partnership status; and**

**Age**

These can be called the **Protected Characteristics**.

We will not tolerate racism, sexism, negative attitudes towards disability and other discriminatory practices. Any breach of this policy is dealt with by the appropriate member of staff or line manager. Where further action is needed, this will be taken in line with the school behaviour management policy, staff disciplinary procedure or complaints policy.

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### *Objectives*

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We aim to:

- Encourage students to be open-minded and challenge prejudice.

- To help students to develop their self-esteem and to recognise that they are each valued as individuals through actively encouraging their access to the full curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
  - To demonstrate that students are respected as individuals.
  - To help each student to achieve their full potential.
- To enable students to contribute actively to the process of education by bringing their cultural experiences, values and perspectives to it.
  - Be sensitive about equal opportunities issues in the selection of teaching materials and be aware of images and text, which may stereotype or denigrate groups or individuals.
  - Ensure that The Willows School is an equal opportunities employer so that staff feel valued, supported and have appropriate advice and encouragement for Professional Development.
  - To use our resources to help those who need additional help to overcome barriers.

**We aim to achieve this by:**

- Treating all those within the whole school community (e.g. students, staff, governors, parents and community) as individuals with their own particular abilities, beliefs, challenges, attitudes, background and experiences.
- Creating a school ethos which promotes equality, develops understanding and challenges myths, stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices
- Encouraging everyone within our school community to gain a positive self- image and high self-esteem.
- Having high expectations of everyone involved with the whole school.
- Promoting mutual respect and valuing others' similarities and differences and facing equality issues openly.
- Striving to identify and removing all practices, procedures and customs which are discriminatory and replacing them with practices which are fair to all.

***Monitoring and reviewing all of the above to seek to secure continuous improvement.***

This statement of Equal Opportunities requires a commitment from every member of the school community. It is based upon our Code of Conduct that rests upon the principles of Respect, Responsibility and Cooperation.

The Willows School staff and governors will ensure that:

**Gender**

- That all students have equal access to activities, opportunities and services offered at The Willows as appropriate.
- That teaching and associate staff are aware that gender stereotyping may influence their expectations and attitudes. Teaching ethos and curriculum organisation should actively encourage students to make choices based on their preferences.

- They should act as positive role models for students.

## **Disability**

- That students will be encouraged to have an awareness of, and understanding of, disability which will be promoted through the Active lessons
- That all staff will be aware of the specific individual needs of students with disabilities and will provide appropriate support.
- School access will be appropriate for all students.

## **Race**

The Equality Act 2010, defines racial discrimination as discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, and nationality, ethnic or national origins.

Appropriate action will be taken in line with our Behaviour Management and Anti- bullying policies in dealing with any incident of physical or verbal threats, abuse or harassment of individuals or groups related to their religion, race, language, ability/disability, sexuality age or gender.

This policy has been developed with reference to the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 and should be reviewed if substantial changes occur.

This policy, sets out our commitment to tackling racial discrimination and promoting equality and good race relations, and explains what this means for the whole school community.

This school will promote race equality and oppose racism in all its forms and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality.

## **Religion**

We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith; others are committed to a greater or lesser extent to a variety of religions. We seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.

With regard to the teaching of RE we consider that the role of the teacher is that of educator and not that of evangelist. We do not seek to make students religious, but to teach them about religion.

## **Vulnerable groups**

- That all students have equal access to activities, opportunities and services offered at The Willows as appropriate.
- That teaching staff are aware of how vulnerability e.g. a student in care may influence their expectations and attitudes and should therefore adjust their behaviour accordingly.

## **The ethos of the school**

- This policy reflects the ethos of the school and is linked to all the school's policies.
- Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is kept informed about this equality policy and abides by it.
- The policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.

## **Student's achievement and progress**

- Students' attainment and progress in individual subjects are monitored by groups e.g. ethnicity, gender, SEN.
- The school develops strategies for tackling differences in the attainment and progress of groups.
- The school values the achievements and progress of students from all groups.
- All students have equal access to extra-curricular activities.
- Students are offered the support and guidance they need.
- Staff challenge racism and stereotyping and promote racial and gender equality in education, employment, training and career choice.
- Steps are taken to strive to ensure that students on work experience are not subjected to racism or sexual/racial harassment.

## **Curriculum, teaching and learning (including language and cultural needs)**

- This school promotes an inclusive curriculum which aspires to the diverse nature of our society.
- Diversity is promoted and racism and discrimination challenged.
- Curriculum planning takes account of the needs of all students.
- Subject leaders provide guidance and examples of good practice for colleagues.
- The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for all students.
- The allocation of students to teaching groups and optional subjects is fair and equitable to students from all groups.
- Assessment outcomes are used to: identify the specific needs of all students; inform policies, planning and the allocation of resources.
- Teaching methods and styles take account of the needs of boys and girls, students from different ethnic groups and students with SEN; and encourage positive attitudes to ethnic difference, cultural diversity and racial equality.
- The school takes active steps to ensure that resources in all areas of the curriculum are inclusive.

## **Students who have English as an Additional language (EAL)**

- The school recognises and values multilingualism.

- The language and learning needs of ethnic minority students are identified and appropriate support used.

### **Parents, governors and community partnership**

- Parents are welcome and respected in school.
- People from minority ethnic communities are able to become school governors.
- Governors will be encouraged to play an active role in the life of the school in order to fulfil their monitoring duties.
- The school seeks to support all governors in performing their role, for example, through school induction procedures for new governors.
- All parents are regularly informed of their child's progress.
- Steps are taken to involve minority ethnic parents in the life of the school.
- The school's premises and facilities are equally available for use by all ethnic groups.
- The school enables community groups to use its facilities for after school activities and for holiday schemes.

### **Pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusion**

- The school's procedures for managing behaviour and disciplining students are fair and applied equally to all students, irrespective of ethnicity.
- The process of excluding a pupil is fair and equitable to all students.
- Strategies to reintegrate long-term truants and excluded students address the needs of students from all ethnic groups.

### **Racism and racial harassment**

- There are established procedures for dealing with and recording incidents of racism and racial harassment which are understood by everyone in the school community.

### **Admissions and transfer procedures**

- This school will take active steps to ensure that the admission process is fair and equitable to students from all groups in line with our funding agreement.
- The school monitors students' attendance for all groups and uses the data to develop strategies to address poor attendance.
- Provision is made for students to take time off for religious observance, through leave of absence and authorised absence.

### **Staff recruitment and career development**

- Recruitment and selection procedures are consistent with the statutory Race Relations Code of Practice in Employment and other Equality legislation.
- Applications from all ethnic groups are welcomed at all levels in school.
- The recruitment and selection process ensures that discrimination is not taking place.

- The school monitors the employment and professional development of staff by ethnicity. Proactive steps are taken to identify, support and provide opportunities for the professional development of staff from all ethnic groups.
- The school strives to ensure that redundancy policies avoid any form of discrimination.

## **Equal Opportunities Employer**

The Head teacher ensures that in recruitment procedures any advertisements, shortlisting and interview procedures are without any hint of direct or indirect discrimination. In staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based upon strict professional criteria as laid down in the job description. During employment it would be unlawful to discriminate in the way opportunities for promotion, transfer or training were offered. It is also unlawful to discriminate in dismissals, particularly in redundancy dismissals.

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### *Roles and Responsibilities*

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#### **All Staff**

All staff are responsible for upholding and promoting the School Code of Conduct and for promoting equality and raising the achievement of all students (including, for instance, those from minority ethnic groups).

#### **Governors**

The Governing Body of the school has agreed this policy and will review it annually. The Governing Body will receive progress reports from the Head teacher and other school staff on a termly basis, as part of the Head teacher's verbal or written report to Governors.

One member of the Governing Body will have responsibility for monitoring this policy, acting as designated Governor for equality.

#### **Principal**

The Head teacher will demonstrate through personal leadership the importance of this policy ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy and understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to it. The Head teacher will monitor the impact of this policy.

Where additional funding is available for raising the achievement of specific groups of students, the Head teacher will ensure that the additional resources are used appropriately for this purpose and targeted on the basis of identified needs. The Head teacher will report termly to the Governing Body.

#### **Teachers**



Teachers will familiarise themselves with this policy and know that their responsibility is to ensure that the policy is implemented. They will know the implications of the policy for their planning, teaching and learning strategies as well as for behavioural issues.

### **Associate Staff**

Associate staff will familiarise themselves with this policy and know what their responsibility is to ensure that the policy is implemented.

### **Students**

Students will be made aware of how the policy applies to them. They will learn to treat each other with respect and report incidents of a discrimination to an appropriate adult.

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#### *Awareness of Policy*

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Parents and students should know that the school has an equality and diversity policy and is committed to equality of opportunity for all students. This policy will be available on the Schools website and on request from the school office.

The Willows School Governing body actively promote and implement equal opportunities. The governors agree that transparency in the dealing with staff issues will allow colleagues to feel comfortable with the outcomes.

Our accessibility and admissions policy both include information on the following arrangements regarding disabled students:

- Arrangements at the school for the admission of students with disabilities
- The steps to prevent those students being treated less favourably than other students.
- The facilities to assist access to the school by students with disabilities.

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#### *Monitoring*

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Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the equality and diversity policy and race equality policy is undertaken in the following ways:

- All reports of racism and discrimination are logged.
- Student achievement is analysed in terms of ethnicity, gender, SEND and Children in Care (those who are looked after) and those identified as eligible for pupil premium.
- Recruitment processes are monitored in terms of recording ethnicity, details about applicants and appointments through the 'Equal Opportunities' section of the application form and recruitment recording forms.

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#### *Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination*

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**Questions about this policy:** If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Head teacher.

**Complaints:** If you believe that you have received less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed in paragraph 2 above, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's formal Complaints Procedure. For a copy of the School's complaints procedure, please contact the Head teacher. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the complaints procedure.

**Reports:** If you would like to report a breach of this policy that does not constitute a complaint, please contact the Head teacher.

**Enforcement:** We will treat seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the School Community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

**Record:** All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded and this record will be reviewed annually by the [• the Principal].

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### *Complaints Procedure*

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If anyone in the school feels that this policy is not being followed then they should raise the matter with their personal line manager and if necessary the Head teacher. If there is a formal complaint then the school's complaints procedure will be used.

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### *Review*

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The Willows School monitors the impact of their policies and procedures on different groups (by race, gender and disability) and the effectiveness of such policies are assessed through The Willows Schools self-evaluation procedures. The outcomes of monitoring, pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusion are analysed annually by the Senior Leadership Team attitudes and the effectiveness of the policy is reviewed.

**Signed:** Malcolm Shaw  
Headteacher

Bal Grant  
Chair of Governors