Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Contents

1. Introduction 1
2. Compliance 2
3. Who This Policy Supports 2
4. Definitions of Discrimination 3
5. Roles and Responsibilities 3
6. Duty to Make Reasonable Adjustments 4
7. Admissions 4
8. Curriculum Delivery 4
9. Exclusion Policy 4
10. Recruitment and Selection 4
11. Reporting and Recording Incidents 4
12. Complaints and Grievances 5
13. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review 5
14. Equality Analysis and Objectives 5
15. Promoting Accessibility and Inclusion 5
16. Useful Resources 6

1. Introduction

Waterside School is committed to fostering a positive, inclusive, and diverse school culture in which all learners, staff, and visitors are valued and supported to reach their full potential, regardless of age, disability, race, religion, belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic. We actively promote equality of opportunity and are dedicated to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, or victimisation in any form.

This policy applies to all members of the Waterside School community, including **staff (permanent, temporary, part-time, volunteers, and trainees), learners, parents/carers, governors, and visitors**.

It underpins all aspects of school life and should be read alongside other key policies, including:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Praise Policy
- Maintaining a Safe Environment Policy
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Children Missing from Education Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action. Discriminatory behaviour, bullying, or harassment of staff or learners by visitors will not be tolerated.

2. Compliance

Waterside School operates in accordance with the **Equality Act 2010**, including its provisions for all nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. All staff share responsibility for ensuring compliance, preventing discrimination, and promoting equality. Breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary measures.

3. Who This Policy Supports

Waterside School recognises that certain groups may be at increased risk of disadvantage or discrimination. These include, but are not limited to:

- Learners who are looked after or on the edge of care
- Learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD)
- Learners at risk of exclusion or currently excluded
- Learners from ethnic minority backgrounds, including Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities
- Learners for whom English is an additional language
- Learners missing in education or at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)
- Learners with physical or mental health needs affecting attendance or participation
- Learners with substance misuse issues
- School-age parents
- Young carers
- Learners with offending behaviour or at risk of offending
- Learners who are gender-questioning or undergoing gender transition
- Learners who identify as Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual
- Learners receiving free school meals or living in areas of deprivation
- Gifted and talented learners

This policy ensures equality of opportunity and fairness for all identified groups, in line with **ISS Part 3 and Part 8** expectations, safeguarding their welfare, promoting participation, and addressing barriers to learning.

4. Definitions of Discrimination

Waterside School follows the Equality Act 2010 definitions for unlawful discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination**: Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by association**: Direct discrimination due to association with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- **Perception discrimination**: Discrimination because someone is thought to possess a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination**: A policy or practice that applies to all but disadvantages people with a protected characteristic, unless justified.
- **Discrimination arising from disability**: Treating a disabled person unfairly due to something connected with their disability.
- **Harassment**: Unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic, violating dignity or creating a hostile environment.
- **Third-party harassment**: Harassment by someone outside the school, linked to a protected characteristic.
- **Victimisation**: Detriment suffered because someone has made a complaint or provided evidence about discrimination.

False or malicious claims are not protected and may result in disciplinary action.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The **Headteacher** has overall responsibility for equality and diversity. They ensure the school complies with legislation, implements this policy across admissions, curriculum, recruitment, and daily operations, and monitors the effectiveness of actions. The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Promoting a culture of respect, dignity, and tolerance
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are made to meet individual needs
- Ensuring staff receive equality and diversity training appropriate to their roles
- Recording, managing, and analysing incidents of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation

All staff are responsible for:

- Treating colleagues, learners, and visitors with dignity and respect
- Avoiding behaviour that could constitute discrimination, harassment, or victimisation
- Supporting measures to promote equality and diversity
- Actively challenging discrimination and disadvantage
- Reporting issues in accordance with this policy

Staff may be personally liable for acts of discrimination or harassment during their employment. Attempts to instruct or induce others to discriminate are also unlawful and subject to disciplinary action.

6. Duty to Make Reasonable Adjustments

Waterside School actively seeks to make **reasonable adjustments** to ensure that learners and staff with disabilities can access facilities, education, and opportunities on an equal basis with others. This includes removing or reducing obstacles that may prevent full participation, in line with OFSTED expectations for accessibility and inclusion. For guidance, the Equality and Human Rights Commission website provides additional advice: www.equalityhumanrights.com

7. Admissions

Admissions decisions follow the published **Admissions Policy** and are applied consistently, regardless of any protected characteristic. All learners are considered fairly and in line with SEND Code of Practice guidance.

8. Curriculum Delivery

The curriculum is designed to tackle inequalities, promote inclusion, prevent bullying, and challenge stereotypes. Principles of equality and diversity are embedded in all academic and social learning. The school takes proactive steps to prevent discrimination or victimisation in access to lessons, trips, work experience, or leisure activities.

9. Exclusion Policy

Exclusion, whether fixed-term or permanent, is a **last resort**. Decisions are made consistently and fairly, in accordance with the school's **Exclusion Policy**, regardless of any protected characteristic.

10. Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment, promotion, training, pay, and benefits are applied fairly and based on merit. Waterside School makes reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment process. Third-party recruiters are required to adhere to the school's equality and diversity principles.

11. Reporting and Recording Incidents

All incidents of discriminatory treatment, bullying, or harassment must be reported to senior staff and **recorded within 24 hours**. The Anti-Bullying Policy guides response to confirmed or alleged bullying.

12. Complaints and Grievances

Anyone who believes they have been subject to discrimination, harassment, or victimisation may follow the school's **Complaints or Grievance Procedure**.

13. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review

The Headteacher monitors and evaluates the implementation of this policy. Staff, parents, carers, and placing authorities are informed of the policy, and support is provided to anyone wishing to understand it. Copies are available in the school office and online.

The policy is reviewed at least annually or more frequently in response to significant incidents, legislative changes, or guidance updates.

14. Equality Analysis and Objectives

Waterside School undertakes an **Equality Audit** to assess current practice, identify gaps, and inform priorities.

The process includes:

1. **Assemble a group** responsible for equality analysis.
2. **Gather information** from learner and staff data, attendance, exclusions, safeguarding records, parental engagement, and community demographics.
3. **Analyse data** against protected characteristics. Identify inequalities and current measures to address them.
4. **Compile action plan** to reduce disadvantage and set measurable equality objectives.
5. **Prioritise objectives** to focus on actions with the greatest impact.
6. **Publish information and objectives** and update annually.
7. **Review progress** regularly and adjust objectives every four years.

The audit informs leadership, curriculum planning, staff training, admissions, accessibility, and community engagement.

15. Promoting Accessibility and Inclusion

Waterside School is committed to:

- Ensuring accessible facilities and curriculum
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Promoting full participation in school life
- Reducing exclusion and disadvantage
- Regularly reviewing accessibility plans and inclusive practices

16. Useful Resources

- Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE) – www.csie.org.uk
- Equality and Human Rights Commission – www.equalityhumanrights.com
- Stonewall LGBT Education Resources – www.stonewall.org.uk
- Runnymede Trust Race Guidance – www.runnymedetrust.org
- SEND Code of Practice (Jan 2015) – www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice
- Guidance on Reasonable Adjustments – www.equalityhumanrights.com