



The Willows School and Early Years Centre

Fishermead Boulevard, Fishermead, Milton Keynes MK6 2LP

Tel: 01908 528803 Email: office@thewillowseyc.org.uk

Website: www.thewillowseyc.org.uk

To become honest, active citizens and lifelong learners in a global society

Equality Policy

This policy is in response to The Equality Act 2010 and on the advice of EMASS replaces the Race policy, the Equality policy, the Disability Equality scheme, the Equal Opportunities policy and the Anti Bullying policy. These policies remain in the policy folder for reference. This new policy will show how the school will meet the general duty outlined in Section 149 of the Equality Act. This act has three aims requiring public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under 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 protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Willows is situated just south of the centre of Milton Keynes. We have children in school from many different socio and economic backgrounds. We have 59% of pupils who come from ethnic minority backgrounds and 55% do not have English as a home language. We have had no reported prejudice based incidents for many years but this does not mean that we are complacent. Fostering children's understanding and appreciation of cultural differences is an integral part of the school.

The Willows values the benefits of having a diverse population. The school enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith and actively encourages all pupils to understand these. It also recognises the harmful effects of bullying and prejudice in society. These can unfairly limit the life chances of young people and exclude them from full participation in social, economic, political and cultural life. We believe in celebrating diversity, and that eradicating all forms of prejudice and promoting equality for all must be an integral part of all school's work. This policy will support the school in eliminating discrimination and victimisation and in identifying and dealing with prejudice based incidents or hate crime.

A prejudiced based incident is any incident which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be prejudiced towards an individual, due to one or more of their protected characteristic, which are age, disability, faith, gender, identity/reassignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity status, race, sex or sexual orientation. Hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's real or perceived disability, faith, gender identity, race or sexual orientation.

This policy is available for all staff and parents and was written in consultation with Governors, staff and parents.

AIMS

The school is committed to being an inclusive school and giving equal opportunities to all our children.

- being proactive in promoting equality, good relations and tackling unlawful discrimination
- encouraging supporting and enabling all pupils and staff to achieve their full potential
- working in partnership with parents and the wider community to tackle discrimination and establish, promote and disseminate equality good practice
- ensuring that all staff, pupils and parents adhere to the principles of this policy

The following staff or bodies within the school are responsible for certain duties in line with this policy.

The Governing Body ensures:

- that the school complies with equality legislation, including the general and specific duties, making reasonable adjustments to provision where necessary to uphold equality law
- that the SES and its related procedures and strategies are implemented
- that a Governor is elected who has lead responsibility for the single equality scheme, and who will receive appropriate training
- that this Governor supports the headteacher in consultations with all stakeholders and in implementing any actions necessary
- the equality objectives are reviewed, at least every four years

The headteacher:

- works with the governing body to ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented effectively
- appoints person(s) responsible for co-ordinating work under the seven protected characteristics
- ensures that stakeholders, including staff are aware of their responsibilities under the scheme and are given appropriate training and support so that they can fulfil their responsibilities
- monitors progress within the SES and provides an annual report to the governing body
- manages any day to day issues arising from the SES whether from pupils or for the school as an employer
- takes appropriate action with staff or pupils who discriminate
- tracks the progress of groups of pupils with protected characteristics

All staff need to:

- be aware of the single equality scheme, actively support it and ensure that any training requirements are reported to the headteacher
- deal with incidents of discrimination and know how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping, as well as being aware of procedures
- ensure that activities or personal behaviour do not discriminate on any grounds
- keep up to date with equalities legislation by attending training and information events organised by the school or local authority

We achieve educational inclusion by continually reviewing what we do, through asking ourselves key questions.

In our school the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every child are important. We follow the necessary regulations to ensure that we take the experiences and needs of all our children into account when planning for learning.

Teaching staff need to:

- ensure that pupils from all groups have full access to the curriculum
- promote equality and diversity through teaching and through encouraging community cohesion
- modify teaching and learning as appropriate for all children
- encourage pupils and families to respect and value differences between people and prepare pupils for life in a diverse society.

Pupils need to:

- be aware of and act in accordance with the SES
- understand the importance of reporting prejudice based incidents

Parents/carers will:

- have access to the scheme
- be encouraged to support the policy
- have the opportunity to attend any relevant meetings/awareness raising sessions related to the policy
- have the right to be informed of any incident related to this scheme which could directly affect their child

Visitors and contractors:

- will ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, the school's single equality scheme.

Recording of incidents

All incidents and hate crimes should be recorded and the school will record any incidents with appropriate details on the form in the school office. Completed forms will be held centrally in the office and termly reports will be sent to MK council on the nature and frequency of incidents. The headteacher will then analyse the incidents. The headteacher should consider whether:

It is important that :

- the number of incidents, especially a null result, reflect the nature of community relations in the school
- there is any trend in the nature of prejudice based incidents and hate crime ie are incidents predominantly homophobic, disablist or racial
- statistics provide evidence that policies and practices are working by the scale and number of incidents, and by the prevalence of repeat incidents
- they can be confident that pupils feel at ease to report incidents

The findings will inform the schools behaviour policy and procedures, and influence classroom practice. Behaviour that can be seen as possibly reflecting community tension within the school as a whole should be monitored eg where small groups of pupils form isolated groups within the classroom or playground. The Willows will continue to develop healthy relationships with their local communities as we need to be aware of community issues to ensure that all our children reach their full potential and barriers to learning are removed.

Victim support

The Willows attaches importance to comforting and supporting victims of prejudiced based incidents or hate crime. Staff will endeavour to explain to the victim the actions taken in dealing with the perpetrator and express the attitude of the school towards such behaviour. Staff should allow the pupil or adults the opportunity to express their own concerns and feelings and provide further support if deemed necessary.

Procedures and policy

It is important that:

- prejudice based incidents and hate crimes are clearly identified as such and the frequency and nature of them is monitored within school

- preventative action is taken in school to reduce the likelihood of such incidents occurring
- the wider implications of such incidents for the school and the local community are recognised
- full and regular reporting of these incidents is provided to the governing body
- full and termly reporting of these incidents is provided to MK council
- staff are familiar with formal procedures for recording and dealing with prejudice based incidents and hate crimes so that they are vigilant regarding these behaviours
- pupils are involved in drawing up and agreeing principles and codes of practice relating to all types of bullying and harassment, and play a part in dealing with prejudice based incidents and hate crimes
- parents are involved in agreeing principles and procedures for dealing with prejudice based incidents and hate crimes
- perpetrators are dealt with effectively
- victims of prejudice based incidents and hate crimes are supported

Incidents may include

- threatened or actual physical assault
- derogatory name calling, insults, for example racist jokes or homophobic language
- hate graffiti
- provocative behaviour such as wearing badges or symbols belonging to right wing or extremist organisations
- distributing offensive literature
- inciting hatred or bullying against pupils who share a protected characteristic
- prejudiced or hostile comments in the course of discussions within lessons
- teasing in relation to any protected characteristic eg sexuality, language, religion or cultural background
- refusal to cooperate with others because of their protective characteristic whether perceived or real
- expression of prejudice calculated to offend or influence the behaviour of others
- attempts to recruit other pupils to organisations and groups that sanction violence, terrorism or hatred

It is important to recognise that:

- such incidents are often part of more complex interactions which may take place in school – for example, an argument about friendship may lead to a prejudiced based incident or hate crime
- teachers may need to deal with prejudiced or hostile comments made by parents or other adults as well as pupils

- incidents may involve group as well as individual behaviour
- prejudiced behaviour can occur without anyone belonging to the targeted characteristic being present – for example telling jokes about a disability
- acts or expressions may include negative body language – for example a refusal to sit next to or work with a homosexual pupil
- harassment is not based on whether or not the perpetrator intended to harass, or understands the prejudiced content of what he or she has done, but rather the effects of the incident

It is recognised that staff will use their professional judgement in dealing with specific incidents, but individual practice should be based on school policy. Response may include sanctions, withdrawal of privileges, counselling etc and parents should be informed.

Any prejudiced behaviour from any member of staff towards any pupil, parent or another member of staff will not be tolerated and if it occurs Milton Keynes Council Policy and Procedure will be followed. Any parent displaying such views will be asked to talk to the headteacher and explaining their actions or words. There may be occasions when prejudiced based incidents or hate crimes that have occurred outside school, or involve outside perpetrators, are brought to the attention of the headteacher. These incidents should be reported to the police and/or the Anti Hate Crime group who may wish to take action under hate crime legislation.

This policy makes it clear that any prejudice based incidents within the school community will not be tolerated and will be dealt with consistently by staff and/or Senior management. All incidents will be recorded, reported and analysed. Any incidents outside the school community, if corroborated, will be reported to the appropriate organisations.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy will be monitored and evaluated in accordance with strategies and guidance outlined in our Monitoring and Evaluating policy and schedule.

J. Orbell
Y. Abdulrahman
March 2012

Reviewed December 2020
Next review: December 2022