

# Wellbrook School: Equality & Diversity Policy



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## **Policy Statement**

At Wellbrook School, we strive to provide every child with the opportunity to unlock their potential. We honour and celebrate their individuality and tailor our instruction to their personal needs. Our goal is to nurture self-confidence and provide students with the support necessary to help them reach heights they didn't think were possible. We want parents to imagine the possibilities when they walk through our doors and be filled with hope as they see their children achieve beyond their expectations. We strive to be a place where children feel they belong and can thrive.

## **Aims and Objectives**

Wellbrook School Equality and Diversity E&D Policy aims to set out the school's commitment as far as possible to a fair and inclusive community; to clarify our practices in educating for a more peaceful and equal world; to highlight our obligations under UK law; and to evidence the responsibilities and rights of every member of our school community.

This is an over-arching policy that should be read alongside all other school policies and handbooks including but not limited to our Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety policies, and Staff Code of Conduct.

As terminology and language change regularly, we too regularly review and reflect on our preferences that are most in line with our work and the needs of our community. We aspire to have equality, fairness, and parity in our community, and we use this as an umbrella term that encompasses a sense of direction through the way that we maintain, educate, and incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion in our activities.

Whilst we cannot ensure equity in outcome, we can provide equitable resources and opportunities for individuals in our community in any capacity to take advantage of and make the most of all that the school provides.

## **Vision**

Wellbrook School is firmly committed to maintaining a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of school life, nurturing everyone's ability to thrive in an equitable and non-hostile environment, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. We celebrate our school's blend of minds, backgrounds, and experiences, and have a strong and all-encompassing stance against any form of discrimination.

Through the modelling and guidance of our leaders, our policies and procedures, our curricular, co-curricular and pastoral programmes, and with an open communication policy where the individual's view and wellbeing are centre stage, we strive in our daily work to continue to learn and respond to our community's needs and lived experiences, holding firm to our school aims, ethos and rule. We recognise the need for ongoing reflection and evaluation against a chosen recognised quality standard, not shying away from taking the necessary corrective and preventive action if required.

*We will PERSEVERE with humility in our fight for an equal and just world.*

*Nobody's AMBITION will be impaired because of discrimination.*

*Everyone will have the same OPPORTUNITY to flourish in their life.*

*The visible and invisible qualities that make our school COMMUNITY are welcomed, encouraged, and fought for.*

In having a clear vision of the positive and progressive impact firm anti-discrimination structures can have in our world, recognising our role in nurturing well-rounded individuals who are a force for good.

Our focus is not solely on the legal or business case for incorporating more structure in E & D, but on our moral responsibility to be a force for good in the world, in line with our long-held school rule and with recognition and appreciation of our shared humanity and interconnectedness, embracing and respecting distinctiveness. It is our hope that through embedded structures and setting and expecting the highest standards from our community members and stakeholders, we can effect positive change and influence and make a meaningful contribution towards a better world.

## **Responsibilities**

### *Legal Responsibility*

Wellbrook School fully acknowledges and aspires to exceed its duties under the Equality Act 2010, understanding the nine protected characteristics on the grounds of which discrimination is unlawful (and taking definitions of those characteristics from the Act and any amendments in force at the time):

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

- Race
- Religion and beliefs
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Discrimination can take many forms including direct, indirect, harassment, victimisation, by association and/or perception. This also includes incidences of bullying.

Protection from discrimination applies in all school activities, including but not limited to the admission and treatment of pupils and families, the recruitment and treatment of staff, the engagement and work with other partners and agencies, and the provision of any other services by the school. It also includes making reasonable adjustments to accommodate requirements, including preferred salutations, pronouns etc.

### Equality Duty

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school recognises that, whilst not in the public sector, we aspire to promote equality in all activities, known as the equality duty in the mainstream sector. The school commits to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of a protected characteristic, subject also to necessary disciplinary action under the school's disciplinary procedure.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster and nurture good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

### School obligations

The overall responsibility for complying with equal opportunities legislation and the implementation of this policy lies with the Headteacher who will, alongside the School Leadership Team, and with appropriate advice and guidance from members of the governance committee will: -

- Delegate the management of obligations to relevant staff as deemed appropriate.
- Establish sufficient regular review to ensure that the school is fulfilling its obligations under any laws applicable at the time.

It is anticipated that every member of our community supports and upholds the school's views on E & D. More specifically:

**Pupils and Families:**

- Treat everyone they encounter via the school and the wider community with dignity, respect and have a recognition and appreciation for difference.
- Not engage in, collude, encourage, propagate, or overlook behaviour that could be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 and to retain appropriate impartiality in teaching and pupil support practices.
- Actively support all activities aimed at the elimination of discrimination, advancing, and fostering nurturing and strong relationships.
- Be prepared to learn via lessons, assemblies, curricular, co-curricular, pastoral events, tutor meetings and other forums about all matters associated with discrimination and injustice in the world.

**Staff:**

Irrespective of role or contract at the time, all members of staff are required to adhere to the same expectations as pupils and families, as well as role modelling for anti-discrimination in a balanced way, with the added understanding that any member of staff found to have engaged in discrimination may be subject to disciplinary procedures in line with the school's staff code of conduct. In addition, continuing professional development and training on E&D matters is an expectation for all staff, as necessary.

**Contractors and Suppliers:**

It is expected that contractors and suppliers who provide any service to the school will make themselves aware of and respect this policy during the deployment of their work with the school.

Consideration during evaluation, selection and tender processes may include understanding how tendering organisations embrace, adhere, and comply with the Equality Act 2010 and their overall ethos in this regard.

## **Communication and Data**

A copy of this Policy will be communicated to the community members annually and will be visible on the School Portal and website. This Policy will form part of required annual staff policy familiarisation.

## **Measurements and Standards**

The school is committed to continually assessing the efficacy of their E&D activities and there are several mechanisms in place to ensure this is so. E&D will be a permanent agenda item for weekly SLT meetings. As necessary planning, measurement and learning development tools will be used, not least in line with all legal expectations and other key policies. Lessons will be given to all students to educate them on E&D and teaching evaluation processes for all subjects will include an assessment of incorporation of E & D. CPD (Continuing Professional Development) for staff and other key groups of people within the community will be regular and relevant.

Responsibility for the day-to-day measuring of E&D in the school falls to the Assistant Headteacher, and for reporting back to the Headteacher on key issues, concerns, risks, and improvements, as necessary.

## **Complaints**

It is hoped that with an inclusion-focused approach to equality & diversity, complaints around these topics will be minimal, though the school is not afraid to consider that, as with any organisation, there may be issues and concerns that arise from time to time. Any complaints of this nature will follow the procedures laid out within the Complaints Procedure and Staff Grievance Procedures. Pupil complaints can be raised with a trusted teacher for review by the Assistant Headteacher. It is important that all staff involved in handling a complaint do not make assumptions or pre-judge a situation. All complaints of this nature should be taken seriously, dealt with thoroughly and honestly, managed with sensitivity and empathy, and in a way that is consistent with the law, impartially, and without any intimidation, discrimination, or 'othering' as part of the review process. This applies to all members of the school community.

## Inclusivity Charter

Through the commitment to our Inclusivity Charter, the 5 Steps Towards Anti-discrimination apply to everyone within the community: -

The school community shall STEP: UP, BACK, INSIDE, DOWN, FORWARD:

**STEP UP** – the community shall commit to continued education on understanding what constitutes bullying in its different forms including direct and indirect and non- verbal social exclusion. (continued)

The community commits to challenging all aspects of bullying, including but not limited to discriminatory language including the expression of extreme and harmful views targeted at protected characteristics such as disability, race, beliefs, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, and religion.

**STEP BACK** – the community understands and accepts that we all have an individual and collective responsibility to respect one another and to help stop instances of alleged bullying whether ringleader, target, reinforcer, defender, assistant, or outsider (as defined by the Anti-Bullying Alliance). All members of the community commit to reflecting on their actions, omissions, and language towards others. This includes how such matters may be perceived by others subjectively and objectively, including impact over intent. This applies both in person and online.

**STEP INSIDE** – the community knows that all adults in the school community will positively help all parties with any instances of alleged bullying and therefore will report instances of such behaviour for the benefit of all. All members of the community shall be listened to on allegations of bullying and have their voice heard on prevention, reporting and responses to allegations of bullying.

**STEP DOWN** - all members of the community are prepared to be humble in recognising errors of judgement as part of their personal development and commit to best efforts in correcting such errors by engaging fully in initiatives to promote equality through equity.

**STEP FORWARD** - the community shall respect one another and take allegations of bullying seriously and support all parties as part of their personal development, wellbeing, and welfare. The community understands that the school will not tolerate bullying and unkindness and will fully investigate all allegations of bullying and unkindness. The school will act in accordance with all relevant school policies, including but not limited to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.