



WHITWORTH COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL EQUALITIES POLICY

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| Date effective from: | March 2026 |
| Prepared by: | Mrs J Howarth (Assistant Headteacher) Discussed by School Council 28/01/26 Scrutinised by Mrs L Evans (link Personal Development Governor) – Date 24.02.26 |
| Approved by: | Curriculum and Standards Committee |
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Aims of Policy

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are:

Age

Disability

Gender reassignment

Marriage or civil partnership

Pregnancy and maternity

Race

Religion or belief

Sex

Sexual orientation

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school activities)

School in Context

Whitworth Community High School is a smaller-than-average secondary school. Most students are of White British heritage and very few are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The school's population is stable. The percentage of students with EHCPs is in line with the national average but the proportion of students receiving SEN support is slightly higher than average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average as is the deprivation indicator. We moved into a new school building in April 2023: all areas of the school building are now completely accessible to all students.

Age - While the specific legal protections relating to age apply primarily to adults, the school is committed to ensuring that no student is treated unfairly or disadvantaged because of their

age. The school does not tolerate unfair treatment based on age. We recognise that pupils of different ages have different needs and responsibilities, and any age-related arrangements are made to support learning, wellbeing, and safety.

Current Progress Data (2025 leavers)

The following data is presented about the categories that fall under 'protected characteristics' from the Equality Act 2010. Because there are no P8 figures for 2025, we will report A8 figures.:

- **Disability**
- Last year we had 27 SEND students who had disabilities such as ADHD, ASC and mental health difficulties. These students were supported extremely well by the SEND and Pastoral teams, as seen in the 2022/23 Horizontal Review and the latest review, which took place in November 2024.
 - SEND A8 2025: 37.07
 - SEND A8 2024: 31.52
 - National 2024: 30.4
 - National 2025: 28.1
- **Gender reassignment** - we were not aware of any students in the 2025 cohort who are proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex
- **Race/Ethnicity**
 - White British A8 2025: 50.63 based on initial SISRA calculations
 - Non-white British A8 2025: 47.91 (11 students) based on initial SISRA calculations
- **Religion/belief** - Although parents state their religious beliefs, students are not required to update their religion/belief. Therefore, it is not possible to report this data.
- **Sex**
 - Girls A8 2025: 53.64 based on initial SISRA calculations
 - Boys A8 2025: 48.16 based on initial SISRA calculations
 - Girls E/M at 4+: 86%
 - Boys E/M at 4+: 75%
 - Girls E/M at 5+: 35%
 - Boys E/M at 5+: 37%
- **Sexual orientation** - students are not required to share their sexual orientation. Therefore, it is not possible to report this data.
- **Pregnant** - As far as we were aware, no students were pregnant. It is therefore not possible to report this data.
- **Marriage and Civil Partnership** - Although not a current issue at WCHS, students in some cultures may be subject to forced illegal marriages but this is tackled through the safeguarding policy and training for staff.
- **Age** - All students sit their exams at WCHS whilst they are school age. Therefore, it is not possible to report this data.

Legislation and Guidance

This document refers to the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives

Other supporting documents are Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality Act Advice Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf)

and the Equality and Human Rights Commission: Technical Guidance for Schools: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/technical-guidance-schools-england>

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years. At WCHS, this will be undertaken annually due to the ever changing social and educational landscape.
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher

The equality link governor is Mrs L Evans. They will:

- Meet with the designated member of staff for equality and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
- Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
- Report back to the full governing board regarding any issues

The headteacher will:

Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils

Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

The designated member of staff for equality is the assistant headteacher. The assistant headteacher will:

- Support the headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils.
- Meet with the equality link governor annually to raise and discuss any issues and to review the policy. Additional meetings may be required if necessary.
- Support the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in this policy. All staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equality issues.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to treat each other with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour. This can be done verbally, through the school website, or through the Speak Up tab on the student *myfaves* page.

Eliminating Discrimination

At Whitworth Community High School, we recognise that all members of the school and our wider community are of equal value. The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions. An example is the school uniform policy, which is purposely gender neutral.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings.

New staff are directed towards the Equality Policy as part of their induction, and all staff receive reminders every year.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring equality issues, aided by the assistant headteacher and our equality link governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

Advancing Equality of Opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people who are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year within the equalities policy, showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse attainment data each academic year, showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing.
- Use the data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)

Fostering Good Relations

As a school we believe that we should treat each other with care, respect and kindness, and that strong positive relationships make a great school. We aim to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, and Sociology but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English and during Register and Read, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures

Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies, and we will also invite external speakers to contribute

Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community

All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures

Considering Equalities in Decision Making

Our school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. We consider equality implications before and at the time that we develop policy and make decisions and continue to review these on a continuing basis. We keep a written record to show we have considered equality issues and asked relevant questions about the impact of our decisions on different groups in the school community.

Publicising the Policy and Plan

The equalities policy is published on the school web site www.wchs.co

Equality Objectives

Objective 1

Continue the good practice that we began in the previous academic year regarding our approach to the equality policy and practices. Mainly:

1. Include students as our main stakeholders in the annual review of our equalities policy. This will be completed through our school council who are always able to give insightful views on matters that relate to equality and diversity.
2. Continue to deliver annual information sharing / training for all staff so as to highlight the requirements as set out in the Equality Act and our re-visited annual objectives.
3. Maintain the work with our equality link governor so as to ensure that the school is supported and held to account for our equality practices.

Objective 2

Put appropriate strategies in place, including teacher training backed up by evidence and research to address the gap in attainment made between boys and girls.

Why we have chosen this objective: Whilst the progress of boys is mainly in line with the progress made by girls, there is a distinct difference in boys' attainment at 4+ and 5+ GCSE grades.

To achieve this objective we plan to: make this a key School Improvement Plan priority. We will bring the issue to the attention of staff, particularly teaching staff and then put training in place to enable them to put strategies in place that will close the progress gap.

Progress we are already making towards this objective: the issue is on the agenda with teaching staff who have to review their data following assessments, including any gap between boys and girls. Mrs Haworth is taking part in a Lancashire project which is investigating the gender gap and strategies to reduce it.

Objective 3

Maintain the zero tolerance stance in school regarding bullying, with particular reference to Racism, Sexual Harassment and Homophobia. This message will be shared in assemblies, through the form slides and through the visual posters on the form slides and around school. Students will be encouraged to 'speak up' about these issues verbally or communicate with staff through the 'Speak up' or 'Reach out' tabs on the WCHSMYFaves web page.



Monitoring Arrangements

We will review and update the objectives within this equality policy on an annual basis.

The link governor and assistant headteacher will update the equality information we publish within this policy on an annual basis.

This document will be sent to the governing body for approval.