



## **PRAE WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Everyone Valued, Everyone Learning, Everyone Welcome

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### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

Issued: **February 2022**. Review Date: **October 2025** or sooner if legislation changes.

Signature: Jenny Sheppard

Date: October 2024

Head Teacher

Signature: Tony Fitzpatrick

Date: October 2024

Chair of Governors

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the senior leadership team and the governing body. Implementation of practice will be monitored by the Headteacher, Equality Lead & SENCO and reported termly to the governing body.

### ***Purpose of the Policy & Guiding Principles***

The purpose of this policy is to define our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. It represents our commitment to a common set of values and objectives, and a consistent approach to communicating, implementing and monitoring.

### **Our equality, diversity and inclusion vision and values statement underpin school life:**

At Prae Wood Primary & Nursery School we are committed to ensuring equality in our employment and educational provision. We aim to ensure equality of opportunity for employees, pupils, their parents and carers who receive services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of equality, inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

Equality, diversity and inclusion makes a difference to the lives of the community the school serves and recognises the value of each individual. At Prae Wood we are committed to ensuring that our services meet the varied and individual needs of all pupils in our school, that our employment practices are fair and promote equality and that as a school we respect the wide variety of lifestyles and cultures, both locally and nationally. Ultimately, we aim to ensure that all stakeholders; employees, pupils, parents and carers, governors and all visitors to the school are treated fairly, and with dignity and respect at all times.

This policy encompasses the following protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy & maternity;
- race, colour, nationality;
- religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

This policy recognises four types of unlawful behaviour:

- direct discrimination;
- indirect discrimination;
- harassment; and
- victimisation.

Every possible effort will be made to ensure that all individuals are provided with equality of opportunity, treated fairly and decisions made are based on objective criteria.

### **Links with other policies and legislation**

This policy is underpinned by the Equalities Act 2010 and should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies such as Admissions, Accessibility, Behaviour & Anti-Bullying, Staff Code of Conduct, Mixing Classes, Recruitment & Employment, SEND.

Our school motto is *'Everyone Valued, Everyone Learning, Everyone Welcome'* and our approach to ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is based on 7 key principles:

**Principle 1: All learners are of equal value**

At Prae Wood we see all learners and potential learners, and their parents & carers, as of equal value regardless of whether they have or do not have a protected characteristic.

**Principle 2: We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength**

We take account of differences and aim to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic. At Prae Wood we firmly believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

**Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other. For example, we promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability and between disabled and abled people; we promote positive interaction, including positive dialogue and relations between groups and communities different from each other and an absence of prejudice related bullying incidents; and we promote mutual respect and positive relations between genders and an absence of sexual or homophobic harassment. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel they are respected and fully able to participate in all aspects of school life.

**Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and professional development**

We ensure all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees, (for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development) having regard to protected characteristics in relation to their development and implementation and full respect for the legal rights of employees and potential employees.

**Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that may already exist so that every child can make good progress and reach their highest potential**

In addition to avoiding or minimizing possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially the vulnerable. We firmly believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable pupils raises standards across the whole school.

**Principle 6: We consult and involve all stakeholders**

We engage with all stakeholders to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

**Principle 7: We believe society as a whole should benefit**

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life.

***Inclusion***

Inclusion is at the heart of everything we do and everything we stand for at Prae Wood Primary & Nursery School. We advance equality of opportunity across the school amongst all members of our school community. Through our approach to inclusion, we celebrate diversity in all its forms. Early identification of potential barriers is key and we strive to minimise barriers to learning, development and participation that could be experienced by an individual or group of people. Therefore, we recognise that equality does

not mean that everyone is treated the same and we take into account the individual needs and backgrounds of all our stakeholders.

Inclusion of all our stakeholders includes seeking to ensure that no member of the school community, or any person through their contact with the school, receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

Our aim is to be a fully inclusive school where we reflect on our practice so that the wellbeing and personal development as well as the progress and attainment for children (including different groups of children) remains our priority. For example:

- across gender;
- minority ethnic groups;
- faith groups;
- children for whom English is an additional language;
- children with special education needs or disabilities;
- looked after or adopted children;
- children from the travelling community;
- young carers.

We ensure this by:

- providing a safe, secure and nurturing environment where all children can flourish and where all contributions are valued;
- including and valuing the contributions of all families to aid our understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion;
- providing positive non-stereotype information about gender roles, ethnic and cultural groups, and people with disabilities;
- reviewing our practice through improving our knowledge and understanding of all issues related to anti-discriminatory practice and adapting our practice where necessary;
- actively promoting equality, inclusion and valuing diversity; and
- having inclusion at the forefront of our minds in everything we do, every day for all stakeholders.

Where a child is unable to attend school, we work with parents and outside agencies to provide alternative learning opportunities if appropriate.

### ***Staff Recruitment, Employment and Training***

At Prae Wood we are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We are also committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

As an employer we aim to eliminate any discrimination or harassment in our practice and we actively promote equality within our workforce across all groups of people. Age is a protected characteristic in relation to employment and we fully respect the religious beliefs and practice of all our staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

At Prae Wood we are committed to ensuring all employees have equal access to training and professional development opportunities, including support and administrative staff. All employment policies refer to the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010. We recognise that the Act extends beyond the protected

characteristics of an individual employee and that the school has broader responsibilities to employees and situations that may be covered by the Act.

The Headteacher ensures all appointment panels give due regard to this policy to ensure no one person is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities. Employees who are in breach of this policy will be subject to the school's disciplinary policy.

### ***Roles and Responsibilities***

The *Governing Body* is responsible for:

- ensuring the school complies with legislation;
- implementing this policy in its activities;
- ensuring the school complies with this policy.

The *Headteacher* is responsible for:

- providing a consistent and high profile on equality, diversity and inclusion;
- coordinating and implementing this policy;
- ensuring all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to this policy;
- ensuring all staff are given appropriate training and support;
- ensuring all staff follow the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

*All staff* are responsible for positively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, and avoiding unfair discrimination through:

- being excellent role-models;
- treating all members of the school community with fairness and respect at all times;
- promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the classroom and at play - maintaining the highest expectations of success for all pupils;
- planning and delivering a curriculum that fully reflects the school's principles - providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability;
- having due regard to this policy in their role;
- actively contributing to and implementing the objectives and learning from good practice.

*All pupils* are responsible for:

- treating all members of the school community with fairness and respect;
- learning about, respecting and valuing the differences between individuals;
- respecting others through their actions and language used;
- actively participating in lessons / assemblies relating to equality, diversity and inclusion issues through listening and making appropriate contributions;
- contributing to consultation when reviewing this policy through Pupil Voice channels;
- talking to a trusted adult eg. a parent or member of staff if they believe something has happened or been said that was unfair or disrespectful.

*Parents & Carers* are responsible for:

- treating all members of the school community with fairness and respect;
- valuing the differences between individuals within the whole school community;
- talking to a member of staff if they witness any incidents they believe are unfair or disrespectful.

***Putting this policy into practice – how do we ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in all aspects of school life?***

Ultimately, we aim to prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society; where tolerance and respect for all is a given and inequality and exclusion is challenged. Our whole school ethos '*Everyone Valued, Everyone Learning, Everyone Welcome*' permeates all that we do to promote the spiritual, moral and cultural development of all our pupils through our broad, balanced and rich curriculum. For example, we teach children about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through dedicated story times focusing on inclusion and through our assemblies, our weekly RHE sessions, the RE curriculum and across other subjects where relevant. We have carefully designed and tailored our curriculum to ensure we use teaching materials and resources that positively reflect the diversity within our school population and the local community in terms of gender, race, disability and sexual identity and we avoid stereotyping. Additionally, all pupils are actively encouraged to report and challenge prejudice based on discriminatory language, attitude or behaviour.

Through weekly assemblies, termly focused story sessions, special 'focus weeks', displays and the general day-to-day curriculum we provide a holistic approach and positively celebrate all aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion as well as address the potential inequalities. Above all, we actively encourage the positive behaviours and attitudes we expect from our pupils by being excellent role-models and being a fully inclusive school.

Our dedicated inclusion space, 'The Den' provides an alternative pastoral learning environment for children who need a quieter place at different times throughout the day.

Through staff induction all members of staff know how prejudice-related incidents should be approached and dealt with and that we treat all bullying incidents equally seriously. We keep a record of such incidents using the CPOMs system and provide a termly report on the numbers, type and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents to governors.

Our admission arrangements follow HCC guidelines and are transparent and fair. We do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably for example on the grounds of a specific educational need, disability, gender, religion or race. All pupils allocated a place at Prae Wood by Hertfordshire County Council are welcomed into the school community.

To ensure our approach to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion continues to meet the needs of the whole school community we review our practice and procedures annually. We do this through parent, staff and pupil surveys; through discussions with our pupil voice groups; reviewing the RHE curriculum; meetings with parents eg. Annual Reviews & ADPR meetings; year group meetings with staff to review class profiles, one page profiles and care plans; reviewing our SEND Information Report and accessibility plan. All work is reported and discussed at Whole Governing Body meetings.

***Improving our practice***

We are committed to continually reviewing our practice in order to ensure we are understanding of meeting the needs of and providing the best for the community the school serves. We know the needs of our school population very well and, through reviewing our practice by collecting and analysing data annually, we are able to use this information to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.

As a school we also collect data and monitor the progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take swift action to close any gaps and early

identification and intervention is key; for example, children making slow progress in acquiring age-related expectations in early phonic, reading, writing and number skills.

During our termly Pupil Progress Meetings we discuss and analyse the progress and attainments data for each year group and present this information to governors. For example, FSM/non-FSM, EAL, SEND, children with EHCP, CLA. In addition, we collect, analyse and report data in relation to attendance and exclusion.

Whilst we focus on the needs of our current school community, we also have a responsibility to be sufficiently prepared for any new pupil joining to school at any time. In-year mobility has been rising over recent years and every year we welcome approx. 60 new families into our EYFS classes. As such we know that we need to be flexible in our approach and open to reviewing our practice.

### **Complaints**

All complaints of unlawful (or potentially unlawful) discrimination will be treated seriously and will be investigated in accordance with the school's grievance or complaints policy, whichever is appropriate.

### **Equality Objectives**

- To promote cultural understanding and awareness of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups within our school community.
- To monitor and promote the involvement of all groups of students in the extra-curricular life of the school, including leadership opportunities, especially students with special educational needs.
- To close any gaps in attainment and achievement between pupils and all groups of pupils, with a particular focus on pupils eligible for free-school meals; pupils with special educational needs and/or disability; looked after children and pupils from different ethnic groups.
- To eliminate the incidence of the use of homophobic, sexist and racist language by pupils in the school.
- To further improve accessibility across the school for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities.
- To endeavour, wherever possible, to ensure that the governing body, staff body and representation in school leadership is reflective of the local community.