

NEWSTEAD WOOD SCHOOL

Avebury Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9SA



Equality Duty and Equality Objectives

Review Body:	Local Governing Body
Leadership Group Responsibility:	Headteacher
Type of Policy:	Statutory
Review Period:	Every 3 Years
Reviewed:	June 2024
Next Review:	June 2027

Introduction

Newstead Wood School is a selective girls' school of 1265 students. It admits students from a wide geographical area surrounding the London Borough of Bromley and from numerous different primary schools. A defining feature of Newstead Wood School is that it selects students by ability and gender. This is because we believe that teaching able girls separately best provides them with equality of learning.

Newstead Wood School is an inclusive school where each and every individual is respected equally. This policy exists to ensure that we fulfil our vision and values:

Ethos & Values

At Newstead Wood School we value, share and celebrate:

- a passion and enjoyment for learning underpinned by intellectual challenge and academic curiosity
- strength in diversity open-mindedness, and respect
- spiritual, moral and cultural dimensions of our global community
- leadership and character development for all
- working in partnership with parents and carers, and the local, national and international community
- all achievements at school and beyond
- creativity, innovation and ambition in our ability to actively improve ourselves and our future
- a safe and kind environment to build confidence, resilience, belonging and wellbeing
- each individual for who they are and who they can become

We believe that all those who form the community at Newstead Wood School (governors, staff, students, visitors and contractors) have a right to be valued equally and to have equality of opportunity.

We will promote shared values that include equality and diversity, valuing and involving our staff, showing care and respect for others and demonstrating honesty and fairness in everything we do. The delivery of and promotion of equal opportunities and diversity and Inclusion underpins our vision and Development Plan.

Newstead Wood School aims to go beyond the legislation in its promotion and delivery of equality across all areas of our community and all protected characteristics.

This Policy explains and responds to our statutory duties to promote equality in all areas identified as protected characteristics in the Equality Act (2010).

The Equality Act (2010)

The Equality Act (2010) consolidates existing law into a single legal framework. It updates, simplifies and strengthens the previous legislation and provides a modern, accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

As part of the Equality Act 2010, a new general public sector equality duty came into force in April 2011. This duty states that public bodies (which include academies), must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

The equality duty replaces the race, disability and gender equality duties and covers age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Newstead Wood School has obligations under the Act as:

- Employers
- Bodies which carry out public functions and
- Service providers

Therefore, Newstead Wood School makes provision for the following groups of people:

- Employees
- Prospective Students (in relation to admissions arrangements)
- Students at Newstead Wood School (including those absent or temporarily excluded)
- Former Students (if there is a continuing relationship based on them having been a student at the school)
- Families and groups connected to the School community

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against people on the basis of protected characteristics.

The relevant characteristics are:

- Disability
- Race
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

We must therefore ensure, through our functions, policies and practices that we do not discriminate on any of these grounds, directly, indirectly or by association. We must also ensure that harassment and victimisation do not occur and that reasonable adjustments to practice are accommodated where necessary.

Unlawful discrimination is defined in the Act as:

- Direct discrimination (including discrimination based on perception or association)
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from disability
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments (for disabled people)

The Equality Act 2010 also protects people from:

- Harassment, in relation to disability, race and sex and victimisation

A protected act is:

- Making a claim or complaint of discrimination under the Act
- Helping someone else make a claim by giving evidence or information
- Making an allegation that the academy or someone has breached the Act ☐ Doing anything else in connection with the Act

Students must not be victimised because their parent, sibling or friend carried out a protected act.

Newstead Wood School must not victimise parents who make complaints.

The Act contains provision which enables Newstead Wood School to take “positive action” i.e. provide additional benefits to individuals with protected characteristics, to address any disadvantages they may face.

Positive action is not the same as positive discrimination, which would be providing preferential treatment for a particular disadvantaged student/group of student, which exceeds the positive action conditions.

It is worth noting that it is never unlawful to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils. That is, an academy is permitted to positively discriminate in favour of disabled pupils.

Equality at Newstead Wood School

Newstead Wood School operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways:

1. Teaching and learning

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community across all protected characteristics, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our students
- Set up, promote and encourage the work of our Diversity Ambassadors – staff who work together to ensure our curriculum fulfils the above points and ensures that each child's can 'see' themselves in our curriculum.

Specific Objectives:

- 1.1. EDI Lead (Assistant Headteacher) leads Conscious Curriculum working group which meet every half term.
- 1.2. Student Diversity Leaders meet once per half term with EDI Lead.
- 1.3. PSHE review for 2024/25 tracks representation across each protected characteristic.
- 1.4. Each DC analysis is reviewed by PP, SEND, ethnicity and gender.

2. Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors (See Admissions Policy). Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy and Exclusions Policy which is underpinned by current legislation.

Specific Objectives:

- 2.1. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.
- 2.2. We will take positive action to support disadvantaged students in preparing for the Selection Test by providing free preparation materials.
- 2.3. We will track and monitor the number of applicants on their 'journey' to Newstead.

3. Equal Opportunities for Staff

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 and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We know that individuals with certain protected characteristics are underrepresented at Newstead Wood School and have used a positive action statement on all recruitment adverts.

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate any form of discrimination, bias and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. Our work with external organisations ensures we are aware of, and continue to use, best practice in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of staff recruitment and development.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination. These are actively monitored so that we can track our progress in respect of this aspect.

Specific Objectives:

- 3.1. Monitoring and recording recruitment figures on their 'journey' to Newstead.
- 3.2. Provide continued professional development opportunities for all staff linked to increasing their professional understanding and knowledge of protected characteristics, diversity and inclusion.
- 3.3. Senior Leadership Team to be trained to ensure equality of opportunity for all.
- 3.4 EDI is a theme of ongoing staff CPD.

Equality and the law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2005) and Equality Act (2006).

4. Race Equality

This section of the scheme reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act (1976) and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000).

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination;

- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Specific Objectives:

In addition to the Specific Objectives outlined above. We will:

- 4.1. Sign up to the Flair Survey and implement Action plan arising from survey undertaken in 2024.

Our Racial Incidents Policy details how we will respond to any racial incident at Newstead Wood School.

5. Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school’s Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Plan.

The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has:

a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities;
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is “clinically well recognised”, although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The DDA placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people’s needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Specific Objectives:

- 5.1. Review and revise this Policy every three years in conjunction with review of our Accessibility plan.

6. Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty (2006) places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male students and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote gender equality across all genders.

7. Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act (2006) made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2007) came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation.

For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation;
- Promote equality across all sexual orientations.

Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act (2006) inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act (2002), introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion.

Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between students from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

Consultation and Involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this scheme and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, students and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following

- Feedback from parents' evenings and parent questionnaires
- Input from annual staff surveys, staff forums, discussion at staff meetings and CPD sessions
- Feedback from the Form Rep Forum and in student voice activities

- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress with SENCO and Academic Mentors □ Feedback at Local Governing Body meetings.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of United Learning

United Learning is committed to developing and maintaining an environment in which each individual has complete equality of opportunity, and to avoid all forms of discrimination as set out in the UK Equality Act (2010, with 2015 amendments). This applies to employees and students, parents, staff members and volunteers.

In line with this, United Learning seeks to ensure that all members of their school communities, including those who are disabled or have Special Educational Needs, are included, valued and supported. All United Learning schools embrace positive attitudes to diversity and difference – not only so that every person is included and not disadvantaged, but also so that children learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society.

United Learning ensures that all its schools understand the importance of providing a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development and undertake to make reasonable adjustments to enable all to participate.

United Learning is committed to working with the school community and with other relevant agencies to ensure that any form of discriminatory behaviour is treated seriously and action is taken to prevent any repetition.

The role of Local Governing Body

- The Local Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in approving this scheme and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to all members of its community and is responsive to their needs.
- The Local Governing Body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school and welcomes applications from all individuals to join our school.
- The Local Governing Body take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strives to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and students.
- The Local Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of any of the protected characteristics or other factors such as socio-economic status.

The role of the Headteacher (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)

- It is the Headteachers role to implement the school's Equality Scheme and they are supported by the Local Governing Body in doing so.
- It is the Headteachers role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Scheme, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

- The Headteacher ensures that all recruitment processes are fair and free from potential bias, including taking steps to remove barriers which may prevent some individuals applying. Recruitment panels will give due regard to this scheme, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Headteacher promotes the principle of equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect, acceptance, tolerance and avoidance of stereotyping so that all people can participate in all aspects of school life.
- The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with the schools Behaviour Policy and Racial Incidents Policy.

The role of all staff

- All staff will ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives diverse, inclusive and positive images based on any of the protected characteristics and challenge stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of harassment, prejudice, racism or homophobia, and any other acts of discrimination or bias and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher – in line with Behaviour Policy and Racial Incidents Policy and professional conduct.
- All staff will support each other and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents and to report these.
- All staff will keep their own professional knowledge ongoing and engage in relevant CPD fully.

Tackling discrimination

Harassment and discrimination on any grounds unacceptable and is not tolerated at Newstead Wood School. All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a student's individual circumstances.

We actively promote student voice and will always encourage each and every student to report incidents, just as a staff member would. All staff have received training in order to support them in dealing with any reported incident by a student.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment, discrimination, bias or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, and reported to the Headteacher (or their Deputy) in line with Behaviour Policy and Racial Incidents Policy. These are logged and reported to the Local Governing Body in line with statutory reporting requirements.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment, hate and direct discrimination involves hurtful behaviour or treating someone badly because of age, disability, gender identity, pregnancy/maternity, race/ethnicity, religion/belief or sexual orientation.

It can include: hate speech, using offensive language or stereotyping; bullying; excluding or isolating; sexual innuendo and sexual harassment; refusing to provide a service on equal terms; not allowing a mother to breastfeed her baby; graffiti, physical assault and damage to property.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criteria or practice set by a service provider or employer disadvantages people from a particular group (which does not have an objective and legitimate reason).

Failure to provide a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person is also a form of discrimination. If someone tells us that they have experienced harassment, hate or discrimination, we will treat the matter seriously and sensitively.

Harassment on grounds of any of the protected characteristics or other factors such as socioeconomic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, jokes and graffiti.

Prohibited behaviours may take many forms and may include (but not limited to):

- Threatened or actual physical assault;
- Verbal abuse and name-calling;
- Expressions of prejudice calculated to offend others or influence the behaviour of others;
- Graffiti or posts on social media websites including *Facebook* and *Twitter*;
- Distributing prejudiced literature;
- Wearing of badges or symbols belonging to known prejudiced organisations;
- Teasing in relation to a protected characteristic or other factors such as socio-economic status;
- Inappropriate humour;
- Exclusion from groups and games;
- Unwanted looks or comments.

It is important to recognise that:

- Harassment may be one aspect of an incident which also has other dimensions;
- Staff may need to deal with comments from parents or other adults as well as by children;
- Incidents may involve group as well as individual behaviour;
- Such incidents are often part of more complex interactions which may take place in both in school and out of school, including the use of social media.

Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;

- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Review of progress and impact

The Policy has been agreed by our Local Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Policy annually and review the entire Policy and accompanying action scheme on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of students' learning and use this information to track student progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity and disability, to ensure that all groups of students are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.