



**PARKSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL
EQUALITY POLICY
AND ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

Dated: September 2023

Review date: September 2025

Headteacher.....

Chair of Governors.....

Embrace Opportunity. Nurture Success. Inspire Futures

Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan

Our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Vision

Head Teacher and Governing Body

“Our School and Worcestershire County Council is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, creating an inclusive organisational culture and meeting the diverse needs of all our communities in our County.

We aim for all employees to feel they can be themselves, thrive at work and feel respected for who they are. We are focused on building inclusive behaviours that are built on a foundation of respect and appreciation for diversity and inclusion for everyone and in all its forms.

We recognise and value diversity of talent and aim to recruit, develop and retain talented people, value experiences, perspectives and skills. We recognise that being a diverse and inclusive employer helps us to develop a workforce which understands the needs of all our colleagues, and residents, whilst making a difference.

We are committed to ensuring that our school services are needs based and that we support our School Community by fostering good relations between groups who share protected characteristics and those that don't. We will promote a culture of respect and dignity, and actively remove discrimination wherever we find it. We will identify and remove barriers for our job applicants and current employees and will endeavour to meet our school needs through communication and engagement.”

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Introduction

Our School and Worcestershire County Council and Worcestershire Children First (the Council) takes great pride in the diversity of the community it serves and recognises the opportunities and benefits this offers the County. We want to build cohesive communities and recruit, retain and develop a diverse workforce where everyone feels valued, respected, included and welcome.

We recognise that people may experience barriers, which makes it difficult to participate in the life of our community and we aim to advance opportunity and promote the values of inclusion and belonging to everyone in Worcestershire.

Statement of intent

1. Our school is committed to equality of opportunity for everyone and understands that the diversity of our community and staff is a strength to the social and economic prosperity, and innovation in the county. Our school commits to working within the Equality Act 2010 and our Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure that no, visitor to the school, job applicant, employee or other person associated with our school is treated inequitably or in an unlawful or unjustifiably discriminatory way.
2. Our school recognises that people may experience discrimination and less favourable treatment on the grounds of their protected characteristics – as described within the Equality Act 2010:

Age, Disability, Race, Sex, Gender reassignment, Marriage/civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Religion/belief, Sexual orientation.

We also recognise that people may experience discrimination in a range of ways and receive less favourable treatment for other reasons (e.g., on the grounds of their financial or economic status, unrelated criminal convictions, gender identity, education level or location of study, homelessness or lack of a fixed address, political view, or trade union activity).

3. Our School as part of Worcestershire County Council will also take proactive steps to pay 'due regard' to the need to enhance equality, tackle discrimination and help foster good community relations when exercising its functions.
4. The leadership and day to day operation of this policy rests with all colleagues, specifically including the Governing Body and Leadership of the School and they must ensure that all employees within their area of responsibility, partners, and contractors, are aware of the policy and understand their role in its implementation.

Employment

1. Our school is part of Worcestershire County Council and recognition of its role as a community leader, and its' firm commitment to equality of opportunity and as such aims to be an inclusive employer, and to remove any barriers to employment. Our school will continuously review policies, practices, and procedures to identify and remove potential barriers to equality of opportunity.
2. Our school will ensure that no job applicant, employee, or leaver receives less favourable treatment which cannot be shown to be justifiable in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Employment commitments

1. Recruitment and selection criteria, and procedures will ensure that individuals are selected for employment (or volunteering), promoted, and treated fairly based on their relevant merits and abilities. It is also acknowledged that certain roles are exempt from such practices legally where specific requirements are in place and offers or employment may be subject to a successful DBS check.
2. Our school is committed to having a workforce that is representative of the community it serves and will support and enable people to obtain employment on merit.
3. Our school will strive to ensure that its employment policy, practices, and arrangements are flexible and adapted to support, as far as is lawful, reasonable, and practicable, specific needs and requirements of individuals and groups.
4. Our school is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all staff, taking action against all forms of discrimination and harassment. Our school will not tolerate any harassment, whether physical or verbal or otherwise, of employees by members of the public or colleagues. Our school will act on any employee grievance relating to discrimination, victimisation, or harassment. Colleagues will also be supported to report any hate crimes, through the appropriate channels and liaise with Victim Support where necessary.

Partners and third parties

1. It is recognised that there are stakeholders, partnerships and other third parties who collaborate and / or deliver services or have a relationship with our school as part of the Council. It is expected that all parties adhere to the Equality Policy, our values, ethics and practices and copies of this policy will be shared to those we work with or made available.

Procurement

1. Our school alongside the Council will ensure that contracts comply with this Equality Policy, strategy, and all relevant / related legislation.
2. Our school alongside the Council will encourage the local community to take up opportunities to contract and will seek, wherever appropriate, to offer contracts within the local community's ability to deliver, ensuring that they comply with Best Value and legislation on procurement and geographic location.
3. Contracts will be awarded on a fair and open evaluation process considering a range of factors including price, best value, and ability to deliver the contract. A reasonable opportunity for feedback to unsuccessful bidders will be offered where appropriate.

Responsibility for policy implementation

1. Governors, Headteachers, SLT and all employees with supervisory remit are responsible, within our school and their area of work, for implementing and promoting this policy.
2. All school employees are responsible for implementing the policy. They must adhere to it as part of their conditions of service and will be supported and encouraged by their managers. Any failure to do so will be considered in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Procedures and Code of Conduct.
3. Employees and those serving the community for, or on behalf of our School must not:
 - Ignore incidents of discrimination,
 - Unlawfully discriminate against anyone,
 - Persuade, incite, or encourage another person to discriminate,
 - Harass, victimise, or abuse other employees or members of the public for any reason.
4. Employees are not expected to tolerate discrimination from other members of the school community, other employees, providers or any third party or partner.

Examples of harassment / unacceptable behaviour

1. Harassment

Within the Equality Act 2010 harassment is defined as unwanted behaviour, based on someone's [protected characteristic](#) (or a perception that they have a particular characteristic) that the recipient or a witness finds offensive. Harassment could relate to someone's race, sex (including pregnancy/maternity), disability, sexual orientation, age, religion/belief, or gender reassignment.

Unwanted behaviour could include:

- Spoken or written abuse, using offensive words about a particular racial group, or using phrases or derogatory language.
- Offensive emails.
- Comments or posts on websites and social media.
- Circulating or displaying offensive material or insignia.
- Images and graffiti.
- Physical gestures and facial expressions that mock others.
- 'Banter' or jokes that are offensive to the recipient or others.
- Negative stereotyping.
- Telling people to "go back home" or implying certain groups or people are not welcome (implying they do not belong in the UK).
- 'Outing' someone's sexual orientation, trans status, or gender identity to another person without express permission from the individual or group in question.
- Refusing to use the correct pronoun for someone who may or may not have transitioned or has undergone gender reassignment.

Anything that is unwelcome to the recipient is unwanted. The unwanted behaviour must have the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment.

2. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as: 'unwanted conduct [related to a person's sex] which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment'.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Sexual comments or jokes.
- Physical behaviour, including unwelcome sexual advances, touching and various forms of sexual assault.
- Displaying or sharing any image, pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature.
- Sending emails with a sexual content.

Appendix A: Accessibility Plan and Published Equality Objective

PARKSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN AND PUBLISHED EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 2023 – 2027 (to be updated every 4 years)

Target	Responsibility	Reviewed	Date	Cost
To ensure accessibility to school site for people with a disability	Health and Safety Governor	FGB	On-going	N/A
To promote equality of opportunity for people with a disability who use the school (equality objective)	Inclusion Team	Curriculum Committee	On-going	N/A
To ensure pupils with a disability can participate in the school curriculum	Deputy Headteachers SENCO	Curriculum Committee	On-going	Curriculum budget SEN budget

This complies with 'The Equality Act 2010' and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) including publishing an equality objective. Senior Deputy Headteacher monitors this as part of her duties relating to the School Improvement Plan.

Appendix B: Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 The 9 protected characteristics

1. Age

The Act protects employees of all ages but remains the only protected characteristic that allows employers to justify direct discrimination.

2. Disability

The Act states that it is unfair to treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with a disability. Indirect discrimination now also covers disabled people, which means that a job applicant could claim that a particular rule or requirement disadvantages people with that disability.

3. Gender reassignment

It is discriminatory to treat people who propose to start to or have completed a process to change their gender less favourably, for example, because they are absent from work for this reason.

4. Marriage and civil partnership

The Act continues to protect employees who are married or in a civil partnership. Single people are however not protected by the legislation against discrimination.

5. Pregnancy and maternity

The Act continues to protect women against discrimination because they are pregnant or have given birth.

6. Race

The Act continues to protect people against discrimination on the grounds of their race, which includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.

7. Religion or belief

The Act continues to protect people against discrimination on the grounds of their religion or their belief, including a lack of any belief.

8. Sex

The Act continues to protect both men and women against discrimination on the grounds of their sex, for example paying women less than men for doing the same job.

9. Sexual orientation

The Act continues to protect bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people from discrimination on the grounds of their sexual orientation.

Policy History

Issued	September 2023
Review	September 2025