Copthorne C.E. Junior School

Policy Statement on Equality & Diversity in Employment

Approved September 2026

To be reviewed September 2028

Model School Policy Statement On Equality And Diversity In Employment

1. Aim Of Policy

The aim of this policy is to provide employees with a clear statement about the school's commitment to promoting equality and diversity within employment.

We seek to ensure that our working environment is one that respects and includes everyone regardless of their gender or gender reassignment; marital status (including civil partnership); sexual orientation; race, language, ethnic or national origins and nationality (including citizenship); religious belief; disability and / or medical conditions; age; whether they have dependants; trade union membership status and activity or political views/affiliations.

2. Scope Of The Policy

This policy applies to all employees within the school, regardless of how long they have been employed, their contractual hours and contract type.

Definitions

For us "equality" is about opportunity, access, participation, and contribution on a fair and equal footing and providing a framework for this to happen.

The term "diversity" acknowledges there are differences between people and the school values and respects the variety of backgrounds, perspectives, values, and beliefs of its employees.

3. Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the school to have due regard to the need to:

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

Refer to the information from by the Department for Education titled Equality Act 2010: Advice For Schools which provides guidance to help schools understand how the act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the act.

4. Other Information And Policies

Refer to West Sussex County Council's Diversity and Inclusion information for more details about the Council's overall diversity and inclusion commitments. Read this page alongside the Council's overall Equality and Inclusion Policy.

The **Model Behaviour at Work** policy sets out how we expect employees to behave toward one another and outlines the framework for addressing issues that are raised.

The **WSCC Standards of Conduct** sets out the expected standards of behaviour and conduct for all employees.

These policies can be accessed via West Sussex Services for Schools.

5. Guiding Principles

We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all by eliminating discrimination. We will do this by ensuring that our practices reflect relevant employment legislation and good practice. Our employment decisions are based upon job related, objective criteria.

We are committed to having a workforce that reflects the diversity within our community where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

6. Employee Responsibilities

All employees, irrespective of their role, have a personal responsibility to comply with this policy, associated policies and to abide by the Equality Act 2010, in dealing with each other, managing staff and in their relationships with children, parents, carers, governors and other stakeholders.

In particular, employees must not:

- Discriminate against colleagues, other workers, job applicants, children, parents, carers, governors, or other stakeholders.
- Bully or harass colleagues, other workers, job applicants, children, parents, carers, governors, or other stakeholders.
- Encourage or try to encourage another person to treat others unfairly or to practice unlawful discrimination.
- Victimise people who have made allegations or complaints of discrimination or who have provided information about such discrimination.

We will not tolerate any of the above behaviours. Where employees commit an act of unjustified or unlawful discrimination, or allow

discrimination to occur without taking appropriate action, then they could be liable to a claim being brought against them as an individual, for example at an Employment Tribunal. The employee could also be liable to disciplinary action for a breach of the County Council's Standards of Conduct, which could result in dismissal.

For more detailed information see the following documents:

- WSCC Standards of Conduct.
- Model Behaviour in the Workplace Policy.
- Definitions of bullying, harassment, and victimisation.
- Types of discrimination.

7. Employer Commitment

We will carry out the following activities in order to demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity, and also to fulfil our legal responsibilities.

7a. Employment Policies

We will ensure that our employment policies, practices, and associated guidance are fair to all by undertaking an equality analysis when we carry out employee related projects, policy developments and reviews. All of our policies associated guidance and procedures are available to view and download from West Sussex Services for Schools.

We will monitor the implementation of these policies to ensure that they remain fair in practice and that any barriers to and within employment are removed.

7b. Consultation

We have consultation arrangements with a number of trade unions and professional associations.

7c. West Sussex County Council Staff Groups

There are currently six staff groups that recognise and value West Sussex County Council's (WSCC) diverse workforce. All staff groups meet regularly at different locations across West Sussex to discuss issues that members may be facing. The groups welcome new members all year round. The full list of WSCC Staff Groups is as follows:

BAME - this group supports Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic groups, providing a resource of support, safety, innovation, and collaboration for members across WSCC.
Email: BAMEstaffnetwork@westsussex.gov.uk

Carers - this group provides support to all carers by working in partnership to change the culture of our organisation, so their needs are acknowledged and acted upon.
Email: CarersStaffGroup@westsussex.gov.uk

The **Disability Staff Group** (DSG) is a relaxed, informal group of employees dedicated to supporting staff who work for, or with, WSCC who consider themselves to have a disability. It aims to help ensure WSCC is a compassionate and inclusive place to work for people with disabilities.
Email: Disability@westsussex.gov.uk

The **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender** (LGBT) **Staff Group** is a relaxed, informal group of employees dedicated to supporting LGBT staff and ensuring that WSCC is a supportive, inclusive place to work for LGBT people.
Email: WSCCLGBTStaffNetwork@westsussex.gov.uk

Mental Health Staff Group (MHSG) - the aim of this group is to embed a more positive and proactive approach to mental health within our organisation and culture.
Email: MHSG@westsussex.gov.uk

Women in the Workplace - this group aims to address some of the barriers and issues affecting women, ranging from dealing with inappropriate office banter and building confidence and negotiation skills, through to influencing policy and process to ensure that women do not feel disadvantaged.
Email: women.intheworkplace@westsussex.gov.uk

8. Accessibility

If a copy of this policy is required in an alternative format contact the WSCC Specialist HR Services team.
Email: HRPolicyQueries@westsussex.gov.uk

9. Who Can Help?

If **employees** have any questions about equality and diversity issues, they can contact HR Customer Services.
Telephone: 01243 6(42148)
Email: hr.customer.services@westsussex.gov.uk

Headteachers / line managers can also get support from HR Customer Services or, for more in- depth questions about diversity and equality issues they can contact the HR BP Schools And Education Team for advice
Telephone: 033022 22422
Email: HR.Professional.Support@westsussex.gov.uk

10. Document History

Written By: HR Policy & Practice Team (LM).
Date Issued: November 2012.
Updated: January 2013 (to include Academies).
Reviewed/Updated: Specialist HR Services NH March 2020 (updated HR contacts).
Sense Checked: Specialist HR Services KMG May 2020.
Updated: Specialist HR Services KMG May 2023 (Changed title of section 4, removed reference to document that is no longer available and replaced it with hyperlinks to the WSCC webpage on D&I and the WSCC Equality and Inclusion Policy. Staff group information updated. All other changes are cosmetic to improve the style, layout, and readability of the document: removed footer text, changed font/colours of headings, removed unnecessary boxes from headings and text, removed duplicate accessibility information, removed unnecessary tables, made font and size consistent, used bold text to highlight certain words, embedded hyperlinks into text to aid accessibility, removed references to 'please', added page numbers, added Document History).