



## Inclusion & Diversity Policy

**Implementation Date:** September 2015  
**Date / Term of last review:** Michaelmas Term 2025

This policy applies to the whole school including those in the EYFS.

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Approval:	Clare Bradbury, Headteacher
Next Review Date:	Michaelmas Term 2027

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## **1. Aims and Objectives**

- 1.1. As a school we recognise the benefits of having a diverse School Community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Pupils will be taught to value and respect others. The School is committed to being an equal opportunities school and is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of age, race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or background.
- 1.2. At Oakwood we aim to actively promote equality and harmonious relations in all areas of school life; we do not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and, should the need arise, seek swift and fair resolutions. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.
- 1.3. We aim to:
  - promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
  - provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and enjoy economic well-being;
  - provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected, feel valued and have a sense of belonging;
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic;
  - Foster good relations across all characteristics;
  - prepare children for life in a diverse society in which children are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community;
  - include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
  - provide positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age;
  - plan systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity;
  - actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage;
  - make inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities.
- 1.4. To achieve these aims we will:
  - involve appropriate staff in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures;
  - publish and share our policies with the whole community;
  - collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well and no group is subject to disadvantage either through methods of teaching, assessment or the scope of the curriculum;
  - use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to pupils' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning
  - ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity;
  - have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrates respect to others, tackling poor behaviour towards others, including bullying and discrimination and narrow any gaps in outcomes between difficult groups of children.

- 1.5. The aims of this policy and Oakwood's ethos as a whole is to:
- Communicate the School's commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities for its pupils;
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics;
  - Promote equal treatment for all members of the School community;
  - Create and maintain an open and supportive environment, free from discrimination;
  - Foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone feels valued within the School;
  - Comply with the School's equality duties contained in the Equality Act 2010 and follow government advice 'Gender Separation in Mixed Schools';
  - Remove or help to overcome barriers for pupils where they already exist;
  - Enforce that all discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- 1.6. All members of the School community are expected to comply with this policy and treat others with dignity at all times.
- 1.7. All parents are expected to support the aims of this policy and the School's ethos of tolerance and respect.
- 1.8. Oakwood staff, particularly those working at a leadership level, have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote the aims and objectives of the Oakwood with regard to equal opportunities.

## **2. Regulatory framework**

- 2.1. This policy has been prepared to meet the School's obligations under the:
- Equality Act 2010
  - Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage (2025)
  - Children and Families Act 2014
  - Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- 2.2. This policy has regard to the following statutory guidance and advice:
- Equality Act 2010 explanatory notes
  - Equality and Human Rights Commission Technical Guidance for Schools in England (2014)
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- 2.3. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:
- Admissions Policy
  - Attendance Policy
  - Behaviour Management, Rewards & Sanctions Policy
  - Anti-Bullying Policy
  - Accessibility Policy & Plan
  - SEND Policy and Staff Policy Handbook

### **3. Admission**

- 3.1. Oakwood treats every application for admission in a fair, open-minded and equal way in accordance with this policy and our Admissions Policy. We accept applications from, and admit, all prospective pupils irrespective of their sex, disability, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief), sexual orientation or special educational needs ('SEN'). Please refer to the Staff Policy Handbook and Recruitment Policies in relation to our approach to staff recruitment and selection.
- 3.2. Parents must inform us when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and/or ability to fully participate in the education provided by Oakwood so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments may be necessary to ensure that the child is not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other children. Oakwood will not offer a place to a child with disabilities if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, we cannot adequately cater for or meet their needs.
- 3.3. Bursaries are means tested awards offered to those who meet the School's admission criteria but may otherwise be unable to attend the School due to financial hardship. Details of our provision for bursaries can be found on our website or obtained from the school Business Manager.

### **4. Educational services**

- 4.1. Oakwood affords all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). We will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 4.2. Oakwood will:
  - Treat all members of the school community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination;
  - Endeavour to meet the needs of all children and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics;
  - Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with an Education Health Care Plan receive necessary educational and welfare support;
  - Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds;
  - Challenge inappropriate discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff;
  - Encourage children to work and play freely and have respect for all other pupils irrespective of any protected characteristic;
  - Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum and a full range of extra-curricular activities;
  - Work with parents and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination within the school;
  - Ensure that it reviews, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices;
  - Use the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE to:
    - ☒ Promote tolerance of and encourage respect for each other, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
    - ☒ Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.

- ☒ Encourage children to question and challenge assumptions and stereotypes in order to better understand discriminatory behaviours and bias.
- 4.3. Oakwood recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all its forms, including cyber-bullying, are unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management and Anti-bullying policies.

## **5. Religious belief**

- 5.1. Although Oakwood's religious ethos is based on Christian values and tradition, we are inclusive and welcome and respect the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or with no religion or faith) subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of the school community.
- 5.2. The governing body, through the senior leadership team, actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

## **6. Requests for variation in the school uniform**

- 6.1. All pupils from Reception to Year 6 are required to wear the Oakwood School uniform. The Headteacher will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the school's policy on health and safety and it is reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the school's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

## **7. Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disability**

- 7.1. Oakwood has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils, including during the admissions process.
- 7.2. Where the school is required to consider its reasonable adjustments, it will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, Oakwood is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage. We will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the school. Further information on Oakwood's reasonable adjustments duty can be found in our Special Educational Needs Policy.
- 7.3. Oakwood has an Accessibility Plan in place which can be found on the school's website and a hard copy can be made available upon request. This sets out the school's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in our curriculum; improve the physical environment for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by Oakwood; and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

## 8. Roles & Responsibilities

8.1. It is the **Governing Body's** responsibility to:

- ensure that the school complies with equality legislation;
- ensure that the school's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate impact assessments informing future plans;
- scrutinize the recording and reporting procedures at least annually;
- follow the school's admissions policy, which is fair and equitable in its treatment of all groups;
- monitor attendance and take appropriate action where necessary;
- have equal opportunities in staff recruitment and professional development and membership of the Governing Body;
- provide information in appropriate, accessible formats;
- be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy;
- be proactive in recruiting high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.

8.2. It is the **Headteacher's** responsibility to:

- ensure the effective implementation of the policy and its strategies and procedures;
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant continuous professional development;
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice;
- deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with IAPS guidance;
- ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the school's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy.

8.3. It is the responsibility of **all staff** to:

- be vigilant in all areas of the school for any type of harassment and bullying;
- deal effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences;
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture;
- promote equality and good relations and not discriminate against pupils on grounds of race, gender, religion, age, ability and sexual orientation;
- promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society;
- keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

## 9. Breaches of this policy

9.1. Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management, Rewards & Sanctions Policy.

9.2. If you believe that a child has received less favourable treatment as a result of a protected characteristic, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to a child's detriment you are encouraged to discuss your concerns with the Headteacher and/or raise the matter through the School's complaints procedure available on the school's website.