

/E/quality, Diversity & Community Cohesion Policy

Person Responsible:	Mrs Mukherjee	Frequency of Review:	2 Year
Authorisation By:	Governors	Notice Date:	06/09/2027
Authorisation Date:	06/10/2025	Review Due By:	06/10/2027

1 Introduction

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff, students and governors of Upper Wharfedale School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community, as defined in the Equality Act (2010). In addition, the policy and relevant linked procedures, demonstrate the school's compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (2012).

Upper Wharfedale School adheres to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by not discriminating against learners, staff, volunteers or anyone involved in external agencies the school may be working with on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

2 Rationale

Upper Wharfedale School provides an education for all, acknowledging that the society in which we live is enriched by diversity. We strive to recognise and celebrate the diversity within our school community where everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect and fairness.

Community links are at the heart of what makes a strong and safe community. We aim that Upper Wharfedale is a place where:

- There is a warm, welcoming, happy atmosphere that is secure, stimulating and supportive of learning.
- We encourage students to do their best to make them feel confident, valued and proud to be themselves.
- Positive relationships are adopted between students, staff and parents/carers; bullying and anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated
- Students can achieve to the highest level possible; achievement by others is celebrated; different skills/talents/aptitudes are recognised; students can pursue many different interests; achieving a broad knowledge of the world to equip them for life.

3 Overarching principles

As a school we aim:

- To develop and educate all students whatever age, disability, gender reassignment, race, culture, origin, religion or belief, ability, sex or sexual orientation to attain the highest levels possible.
- To prepare students to be full citizens in society.
- To ensure that all students have access to the whole curriculum.
- To challenge racism, homophobia and celebrate diversity.
- To address the issues of stereotyping and to ensure that teaching styles and resources do not strengthen them.
- To create a fair and just school community, that promotes social inclusion, community cohesion and equality; that respects diversity and which challenges and acts upon any form of discrimination and inequality including bullying.

Our Equality Objectives for 2025-2027 are:

- Continuing to welcome and meet the needs of all members of our community as a proud “School of Sanctuary”, where students, staff, visitors and families feel safe, secure and supported
- Closely monitoring the attainment and progress of students who join us on an in-year transfer; working to secure outstanding achievement for all
- Closely monitoring the attendance of more vulnerable learners and acting quickly to work to improve this, where attendance is an emerging cause for concern
- Ensuring that, alongside all students, those with high prior attainment are appropriately challenged and stretched; encouraging them to aim high and be ambitious for their future

4 Our Commitment

- We will not tolerate harassment of any kind.
- We are committed to combating all forms of discrimination.
- We recognise that the monitoring and evaluation of equality is essential to ensure that our young people are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.
- We will work towards eliminating all discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, gender reassignment, culture, origin, disability, ability, sexuality, age, religion and belief.
- We believe that all young people, employees and everyone who comes into Upper Wharfedale School should be treated with dignity and respect at all times and we will not tolerate bullying, harassment or victimisation of any groups or individuals.
- We will be an equality champion and community leader in:
 - Promoting equality, for example by assessing the impact of our policies on different groups.
 - Challenging and eliminating discrimination, for example, by acting quickly to deal with all bullying including that which is aimed at groups as well as individuals, such as racist bullying and homophobia.
 - Promoting community cohesion at all times

5 Our Principles

- To promote equality, diversity and cohesion within the local community. We believe that our school needs to reflect the community and people it serves.
- To challenge discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, age, sexuality, religion or belief.
- Our vision for equality and diversity goes beyond processes to achieve change. We will monitor progress towards meeting objectives by:
 - Taking adequate steps to prevent discrimination.
 - Taking decisive action when discrimination occurs.
 - Taking steps to promote equality, diversity and cohesion.

- We acknowledge the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry definition of a racist incident is “any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be racist”.
- We also recognise that young people may experience harassment and bullying and in tackling these issues in school we use the same definition as above.
- We aim to be a “listening school”. We listen to all our members including other students, staff, parents, visitors, wider community members and other partners.
- We will continue to develop our PSHCE and citizenship programme to promote human rights and equality particularly focussing on the rights of the child, the right to education and the right to be safe.
- Our Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy and practice demonstrates our commitment to inclusion, working with parents and appropriately allocating resources to ensure full curriculum access.
- Our excellent partnership with parents, governors and other stakeholders in the wider community are essential to promoting equality, diversity and community cohesion.
- We will aim to encourage diversity and eliminate unfair treatment and discrimination through our human resource policies and procedures in particular in the areas of recruitment, training and development and promotion.
- We recognise that staff have rights as employees to work in a supportive, safe and harassment free environment and that we all have an individual and collective responsibility to respect each other’s contributions.
- We promote an environment where standards of conduct are of the highest level and to ensure that no-one is harassed, victimised or bullied.

6 Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination - we have a general duty to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people from different racial groups

7 Curriculum

Students are entitled to equal access to the curriculum. This means that barriers need to be overcome should there be reasons why they find certain aspects difficult. Each case will be considered independently. All lunchtime and after school activities are open to all students.

Staff must be constantly aware that their own expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and status of each student and that we ensure that we set challenging targets for all including those for whom English is not their first language. Staff must ensure that teaching resources are multicultural and non-sexist containing positive images of all groups.

8 Language

We view linguistic diversity positively and value different languages, accent and dialect spoken as an asset. Students will be allowed to use their home language in school but not to exclude others, and always use English when participating in school activities.

9 Hidden Curriculum

We are aware that there might be some misunderstandings amongst students, parents and teachers – for example:

- Certain subjects are not for them (they are boys/girls subjects).
- That girls and women are inferior to boys/men.
- That SEND students have ‘problems’ and cannot tackle some curriculum areas.
- That students are somehow quirky or difficult because of their race, religion or sexuality.

We seek to challenge these stereotypes and assumptions at every opportunity but especially through our PSHCE programme.

10 Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as “The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people”.

All forms of direct or indirect discrimination within the school will be treated seriously.

We monitor sanctions and exclusions to gather evidence regarding any gender or racial bias. This information will be assessed each year and presented to school governors. All staff within Upper Wharfedale School have an obligation to address incidents of discrimination.

11 Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

12 Roles and Responsibilities

12.1 Students

In the first instance any misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher/Director of Learning as appropriate.

It may be appropriate to refer the incident to the Student Support team and depending on the nature and number of incidents; parents will be involved as per the school’s Behaviour Policy.

Racist/homophobic/sextist symbols or badges will not be tolerated in school.

12.2 Staff

Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their attitudes. We will ensure that staff have information regarding cultural backgrounds and faiths. They will be expected to be vigilant in and around the school for any type of inappropriate behaviour such as name calling and other forms of victimisation.

12.3 Visitors

Visitors to Upper Wharfedale School are expected to follow this policy and demonstrate good practice; any incidents will be reported to the Student Support team.

12.4 Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility within the school for implementing the policy and will be the named person responsible for taking any disciplinary action in any case of racial or other discrimination. The Headteacher also has responsibility for reporting any incidents to the governing body.

12.5 The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its legal responsibilities.

13 Staff development and training

We will ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

14 Legal Requirements

In line with regulations explained in The Equality Act (Specific Duties) 2010, Upper Wharfedale School has created this policy to demonstrate our compliance with the equality duty set out in this act. Upper Wharfedale School has due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. This is evident in our Behaviour, Accessibility, SEND, Disability Equality Scheme and Anti-Bullying policies
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. This is primarily taught through our PSHE curriculum, our involvement with the local community, including primary schools.
- Publication of information in future years will include evidence of the steps being taken and progress made towards meeting this equality objective that the school has already set itself.