

# Fiveways School Equality and Respect Policy



## Policy Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
3 Yearly	November 2021	Swavek Nowakiewicz	November 2024

## Policy Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors	Malcolm Gulliver	<i>[Signature]</i>	1/12/21
Head Teacher	Swavek Nowakiewicz	<i>[Signature]</i>	30/11/2021

## Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details
19/11/21	Update and re-written to reflect new guidance issued.
16.03.17	Re-written to follow guidance.

## Contents

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1. Introduction
2. School context
3. Equality and Diversity Statement
4. SMSC and British Values
5. Principles
6. Policies and Practice
7. How we gather and use the information
8. How we will assess and measure the impact and report progress

## Appendices:

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1. Legislative Framework –references to documents and websites.
2. The Seven Underlying Principles and questions we will consider when we are reviewing our policies

**This Equality and Respect Policy replaces our Single Equality Scheme and our previous policies and schemes related to race, disability, gender and equal opportunities.**

## 1. Introduction

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Fiveways School is committed to the Equality Act 2010 and welcomes its responsibilities to ensure inclusion and equality for all, so that no policies or practices result in unfair or less favourable treatment of pupils or adults on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics in the Equality Act that apply to everyone are:-

1. Gender
2. Ethnicity (this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
3. Disability including learning difficulties
4. Sexual orientation
5. Gender reassignment
6. Pregnancy and maternity
7. Religion or belief (includes having no belief)

There are two further characteristics which apply to adults: age and marital or civil partnership status.

We also include other areas of equality, such as gifted or talented ability, social and economic circumstance, and speakers of languages other than English. Our school is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

**The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which came into effect in April 2011. It applies to public bodies, including maintained schools and academies.**

**Department for Education (DfE) guidance on the duty explains in paragraph 5.16:**  
*Under specific duties set out in previous equality legislation, schools were required to produce equality schemes in relation to race, disability and gender.*

**Under the [new] specific duties there are no requirements to create equality schemes. But schools may choose to continue producing such a scheme, if it helps them to comply with the equality duty, and they can expand it to cover the additional protected characteristics.**

All public organisations, including schools, have to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, (PSED)) under the Equality Act (2010) to:

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

As a school, we also have a specific duty to:

- Publish information showing how we comply with our general duty
- Publish equality objectives which are specific and measurable, at least every four years

The Equality and Respect Policy will be reviewed every 3 years. We involve and consult staff, learners, governors and parents and carers. We report annually to the Governing Body and through newsletters, on the school website and at parents' meetings.

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of careful review and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups.

References to Legislative Framework appear in Appendix 1.

## **2. School Context**

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Fiveways School is an 'Outstanding' special school which specialises in 'Communication and Interaction' serving the community of South Somerset.

Each pupil's needs are carefully and sensitively addressed within the context of a creative and well-developed curriculum.

We believe our pupils should enjoy school and have fun while they learn.

Our committed staff work as a team to provide a specialist education, enabling all children to develop to their full potential. To this end we are keen to work with parents and carers to ensure continuity of approach.

Fiveways is a forward looking special school, keen to promote the opportunities for pupils with special needs within their local communities.

## **3. Equality and Diversity Statement**

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At Fiveways School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all our pupils, for their parents/carers, for staff and for all those receiving services from the school, irrespective of their gender, disability, ethnic background or other characteristics.

We believe that diversity is a strength – for our school, its community and Britain as a whole – and we will work proactively to address inequality and foster positive attitudes to diversity so that all those who learn, teach and visit here are respected and valued.

We recognise that achieving equality, inclusion and good community relations involves working effectively and in partnership with others, including parents, community groups and local organisations.

We will provide a school environment free from discrimination in which staff, students and visitors feels comfortable. To achieve this, we will educate students, parents/carers, staff and volunteers by embedding equality and diversity into our school's curriculum and reviewing it on a regular basis through our equality and diversity procedures.

Anyone entering the school premises has a right to be treated with dignity and to be free from all forms of harassment. Everybody at the school must ensure that their own conduct does not amount to harassment, have the moral courage to challenge inappropriate behaviour and report any incidents to the head teacher or higher if deemed necessary.

We value our diversity and capitalise on our wide range of individual differences, skills and unique talents that we all bring into the school. We welcome and appreciate differences – such as gender, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and social and educational background. The school's commitment to diversity extends beyond its legal responsibilities to prevent unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. We are resolutely committed to ensuring that every individual has the best possible life chances through their education or employment at Fiveways School.

Two of the school's aims are:-

- ✓ To create a happy and secure learning environment rich in stimulation and challenge.
- ✓ To ensure all members of the school community can grow in self-esteem and develop to their full potential.

All individuals involved with Fiveways School are entitled to learn, teach and work within a non-threatening and supportive environment in which the development of self-esteem and confidence is enhanced. We regard equality and diversity as a fundamental enabler to our school ethos and aims. We expect each and every person to play their part. We want everyone in the school community to be proud of who and what they are, and of their school community.

#### **4. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education and British Values**

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At Fiveways School we promote '**British Values**' through our spiritual, moral, social and cultural education which permeates through the school's curriculum and supports the development of the 'whole child'.

At Fiveways School, we recognise that such development is most successful when those values and attitudes are promoted by all the staff and provide a model of behaviour for our pupils.

The government originally set out its definition of British values in their 2011 Prevent Strategy. In June 2014, the Secretary of State for Education announced that schools would be required to actively promote British values from September 2014.

The DfE have reinforced the need "to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values."

**'British Values' have been identified as:**

**a) Democracy:**

The ability to communicate is the most important area of learning. At Fiveways School we ensure that pupils are given a 'voice' to communicate. The method of using this 'voice' could be using words, objects, photographs, pictures, symbols, touch cues, eye pointing or body language.

We empower our pupils by giving them opportunities to make choices about the things that they believe to be important. This is further supported through the school's Behaviour Policy and by involvement in the School Student Council.

By valuing each 'voice' and by listening and responding to that voice we demonstrate that we support democracy and liberty.

**b) Rule of Law:**

We involve and support pupils in learning about codes of behaviour; helping pupils to make decisions and choices that are acceptable to the school community and society at large.

Pupils are helped to learn to manage their behaviour and take responsibility for their actions. Staff are committed to providing a consistent and predictable environment within the school and beyond. This type of environment enables pupils to feel safe and secure. We can help some pupils to understand the connection between actions and consequences.

Pupils are motivated by other behaviour initiatives such as stickers, certificates, and half-termly awards.

**c) Individual Liberty:**

Pupils at Fiveways are encouraged to become good and valued citizens, supporting each pupil to become as independent as possible. We endeavour to demonstrate that everyone has rights; this includes the right to say 'No' to ideas or activities that they do not want to take part in. Some pupils will be able to take responsibility for particular roles and to understand that with certain rights comes a level of responsibility. Learning to do things independently is an important part of learning to understand yourself.

We support others by participating in charitable events such as, Red Nose Day/Comic Relief, Children in Need and Jeans for Genes Day. At Fiveways School we believe that by engendering a caring and helpful environment and by learning to be independent can boost and nurture a healthy self-esteem.

Within school, pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our E-Safety, PSHE and SMSC lessons and activities.

**d) Mutual Respect:**

We promote each pupil's inclusion, where possible, in a range of activities, settings and locations. Pupils and students have inclusion opportunities via regular lessons at other settings, as well as planned activities throughout the year involving joint activities and community events between settings and group visits in a variety of situations which include: sports events, community events and shared participation with other schools/colleges.

It is important to facilitate opportunities for Fiveways to be part of the community as the pupils, families and staff have much to offer in the development of community cohesion.

Mutual respect is at the heart of our school ethos. Children learn that their behaviour has an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community treat each other with respect. At Fiveways we reinforce the understanding that we are all equal with different qualities, backgrounds, interests and personalities. We celebrate personal achievements and interests.

**e) Tolerance of different faiths and beliefs:**

Fiveways School serves a community where each person is respected and valued equally without regard to ability, gender, faith, heritage or race. Cultural appreciation and development forms part of our curriculum. We place great emphasis on providing

encounters and participation in events and celebrations to broaden all pupils' experiences and awareness of others.

Our Assemblies help all pupils to find out about themselves and others linking their lives to the communities in which they belong and celebrating diversity. The themes cover areas such as: friendships, helping others and celebrations from a range of faiths and world events. Pupils are encouraged to experience British Culture through our curriculum themes.

Although some pupils at Fiveways School may find it difficult to articulate their feelings and concerns, staff are attuned to changes in demeanour and well-being that may indicate anxiety. If they are concerned about a pupil our accepted practice links to the school's Keeping Safe Child Protection Policy which entrusts a duty of care to all staff to actively protect and promote the welfare of children.

The staff work closely with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure that the pupils at Fiveways are happy, well cared for and enabled to learn the skills they need to live a fulfilling life as part of their community.

## **5. Principles**

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We are adopting seven principles, adapted from those chosen by the DFE in their Single Equality Scheme. Further details of the Principles are given in Appendix 2.

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

Principle 2: Relevant differences should be recognised

Principle 3: Workforce development

Principle 4: Positive attitudes and relationships should be fostered

Principle 5: Society as a whole should benefit

Principle 6: Current inequalities and barriers should be addressed and reduced

Principle 7: Policy development should involve widespread consultation and involvement

## **6. Policies & Practice**

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The Governing Body considers equality issues in all areas of strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation. We also make an effort to recruit governors and staff who reflect the diversity of the school.

We consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day life of the school. We involve those who are affected by a policy or activity in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. There are ongoing opportunities for involvement to ensure engagement with pupils and adults alike, from a range of groups and sources, including: -

- Pupils and student's PCR/Annual Review meetings and action plans

- School Council - discussions facilitated by our Communication & Interaction team
- Parents' Survey and questionnaire – sent to all parents
- FoFSA meetings
- Governors' meetings
- School Trustees' meetings
- Staff meetings
- Individual discussions with staff as part of appraisal processes
- Feedback from other users of the school, both during and beyond the school day.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of learners and use this data to support school improvement and take action to close any gaps. We report this data to the local authority when required to do so.

We have a programme of induction and ongoing CPD training to ensure we meet the school's changing needs and to reflect our changing population.

The principles of our Equality and Respect Policy apply to all our policies and practices. Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, information and evidence of our policy in action is also included in other school policies including:-

- ✓ Teaching and Learning
- ✓ Curriculum Framework
- ✓ Admissions
- ✓ Behaviour and Physical Support Policy
- ✓ Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- ✓ Keeping Safe-Safeguarding Adult Protection Policy appendix
- ✓ Staff Code of Conduct
- ✓ Staff Handbook
- ✓ School Development Plan
- ✓ School website and newsletters
- ✓ SEND Policy
- ✓ SEN Code of Conduct
- ✓ Accessibility Plan

## **7. How we gather & use the information**

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The information we gather will be used to inform our school development planning priorities for the next three years and will be considered and prioritised alongside other school priorities.

This will be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary, for example in the light of new information that we obtain through assessing the impact of all our policies.

We will use both this qualitative and quantitative information to monitor our policies and practice and to demonstrate our progress in equality and respect, inclusion and community cohesion.

We regularly collect the following information to support and inform all school development planning priorities, including those which promote equality and respect.



### ***Evidence will be drawn from:***

#### **a) Pupils**

We collect the following information:

Admissions, attendance, attainment and progression, awards, rewards and sanctions, take up of extended schools and community inclusion activities and provision, complaints, racist incidents and bullying.

#### **b) Staff**

We collect the following information:

Staff recruitment and retention returns annually, performance management reviews, CPD provision and attendance, discipline, grievance and competency, lesson reviews and feedback.

#### **c) Parents, carers & families**

We will seek to gather the views regularly of all our parents via Home-Link Diaries, Annual review meetings, parents' coffee mornings & workshops, and Parent questionnaire and survey including: -

- Absent parents
- Disabled parents
- Parents with communication barriers

## **8. How we will assess and measure the impact, and report progress**

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We will ensure that the outcomes of this wide range of evidence gathering is considered on an ongoing basis, informing whole school development planning (SDP) and planning at departmental or curriculum area level where appropriate.

Progress measured against SDP priorities is reported to School Improvement Group Governors sub-committee.

## **9. Our Legal Duties**

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### **Legal duties**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 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.

**Under our specific duty we will:**

- Hold regular equality training with all staff which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme. Through this we will identify our disability equality goals and actions to meet them

### **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 pupils 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 equality between men and women

### **Under our specific duty we will:**

- Hold regular equality training which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme. Through this forum we will identify our gender equality goals and set actions to meet them.

### **Sexual Orientation**

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief or 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 pupils and treatment of all pupils regardless of sexual orientation

## Equality and Respect Policy

### Appendix 1

Legislative Framework –references to documents and websites.

#### **Equalities Act 2010: legislation**

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.

[Equality Act 2010](#) on the [legislation.gov.uk](#) website

[Explanatory notes](#) on the [legislation.gov.uk](#) website

Links to other useful documents –

(taken from **Meeting the Equality Duty: guidance for Somerset schools**)

Insted Consultancy has produced a range of very useful documents, in addition to the summary of the changing legal framework mentioned in Section 2 and the paper on setting objectives mentioned in Section 5. Several of these are available on the Equalities and Diversity team website:

**'Tasks and issues for leadership teams'** which provides interesting food for thought for school leaders and governors

**'Curriculum concepts and classroom activities'** which contains discussions about key concepts such as 'Shared humanity' and 'Identity, belonging and difference', as well as suggested classroom activities across the curriculum

**'Prejudice related bullying and behaviour'** which outlines the history of responses to racist bullying and suggests approaches to all bullying or other behaviour which targets people because of prejudices against particular groups.

The Insted site is an excellent resource and has many other interesting and useful documents: <http://www.insted.co.uk/index.html>

Advice and Guidance from DfE

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/equality-and-diversity>

The Equality and Human Rights Commission website includes a wide range of guidance, both statutory and non-statutory: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

The Government Equality Office website has been decommissioned but there is an equalities section on the Home Office website: <http://homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/> (this has a particular focus on women, sexual orientation and transgender equality matters, as well as overall government equality strategy).

The DfE website has a few useful documents, in particular advice for School Leaders on the Equality Act:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/policiesandprocedures/equalityanddiversity/a0064570/the-equality-act-2010>

## Equality and Respect Policy

### Appendix 2

#### The Seven Underlying Principles

##### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value**

All learners and potential learners are of equal value and should benefit from our school's policies, practices and programmes:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation and faith, national origin or national status;
- whatever their gender or sexual orientation; and,
- irrespective of other factors such as age, income, family circumstances or where they live.

##### **Principle 2: Relevant differences should be recognised**

Treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Different people have different needs and treating them all the same can lead to some people being disadvantaged because their needs are not met. Our policies, practices and programmes must not discriminate, but may be differentiated to take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
- ethnicity, culture and religion, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of racism are recognised;
- gender and sexual orientation, so that the different needs and experiences of boys and girls, women and men are recognised;
- factors such as age, income, family circumstances or where people live, so that different needs and experiences are recognised.

##### **Principle 3: Workforce development**

Policies and programmes should benefit all members of the workforce, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation and faith, national origin or national status;
- whatever their gender or sexual orientation; and,
- irrespective of other factors such as age, income, family circumstances or where they live.

##### **Principle 4: Positive attitudes and relationships should be fostered**

Policies and programmes should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, and good relations between disabled and non-disabled people;
- positive interaction and good relations between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation and faith, and national origin or national status;
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and people of different sexual orientation; and,
- mutual respect and good relations between people from different age groups, with different income or family circumstances or who live in different places.

#### **Principle 5: Society as a whole should benefit**

Policies and programmes should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people;
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- women as well as men, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people as well as heterosexual people; and,
- people from different age groups, with different income or family circumstances or who live in different places.

#### **Principle 6: Current inequalities and barriers should be addressed and reduced**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, our policies and programmes should take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- boys and girls, women and men, and people of different sexual orientation; and,
- people from different age groups, with different income or family circumstances or who live in different places.

#### **Principle 7: Policy development should involve widespread consultation and involvement**

People affected by a policy or programme should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and the review of existing ones. Such consultation should be both direct and through representative organisations, and be based on principles of transparency and accountability. It is particularly important to involve those who in the past have been excluded or disadvantaged, and who continue to face barriers:

- disabled people;
- people of minority ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- women as well as men, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people as well as heterosexual people; and,
- people who face challenges because of their age group, income, family circumstances or where they live.