



THE ARUN VILLAGES FEDERATION

Enabling every child to thrive and succeed

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Committee Responsible:	Governing Board
Person Responsible:	EHT
Date Approved by FGB:	October 2024
Date for Review:	October 2026

Signed.....

Date.....

Introduction

The Arun Villages Federation is committed to creating and maintaining a positive and supportive working environment for all staff. We value and respect the diversity of our staff and welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. Our federation is a community where we help and support each other, reinforcing and promoting our shared ethos and values in all we do. We believe in the strength of positive and purposeful school communities, underpinned by supportive leadership at all levels.

We are committed to being inclusive as a diverse population of both pupils and staff and see this as one of the federation's greatest strengths. In order to ensure everyone can thrive and meet their full potential, it is essential that inclusion and equality of opportunity be at the core of all our federation's activities.

This policy applies equally to current and prospective members of our federation community and school communities within it.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide employees with a clear statement about the federations 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.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees within the federation, 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.

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 victimization;
- 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.

Other Information and Policies

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities, we ensure that this is embedded in all of our policies and planning.

This policy links with the federation's Equality Duty Objectives and Statement, Accessibility Plan, SEND Policy and Behaviour and Relationships at Work Policy.

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.

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.

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.
- Definitions of bullying, harassment, and victimisation.
- Types of discrimination.

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.

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 Education.

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.

Consultation

West Sussex County Council has consultation arrangements with a number of trade unions and professional associations.

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 (MHSB) - the aim of this group is to embed a more positive and proactive approach to mental health within our organisation and culture.
Email: MHSB@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

Accessibility

If a copy of this policy is required in an alternative format, please contact the school offices by email: office@amberleyschool.com or office@coldwalthamschool.com

Who Can Help?

If employees have any questions about equality and diversity issues, they can contact HR Customer Services.

Telephone: 01243 642148

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