Woolgrove School

Equality
and
Diversity Policy

Equal opportunities lie at the heart of all that we do at Woolgrove School. We are committed to ensuring that every member of the school community, whatever their position, race, gender, disability or religion is given the same chance as any other to access the services and support of the school.

2009/10 to 2011/12
1: Vision and Values

Our equality vision and the values that underpin school life

Woolgrove School is a welcoming school where everyone is valued highly and where tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all pupils to maximise their potential regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion or disability. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community.

At Woolgrove School we aim to promise equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

We believe that a child isn’t born with the concept of treating people unequally, such behaviour is acquired and one of the aims of the school is to create an ethos where all feel valued equally. Linguistic and cultural diversity should be seen as a strength and an opportunity to enrich the curriculum. All parents should be made to feel equally welcomed and encouraged to become involved in their child’s education.

Woolgrove seeks to create a happy, secure and stimulating environment in which all can experience success and realise their unique potential.

Aims:

- To raise people’s self-esteem, so that they are able to make the most of their Abilities and talents.
- To foster a sense of curiosity and love of learning, so that all will develop a determination to achieve and Succeed.
- To work in Partnership with parents, other schools and the wider community, to promote a more inclusive education system and a sense of citizenship.
- To promote Independence and encourage intellectual, emotional, spiritual and healthy growth, so that everyone can become lifelong learners.
- To work together in an atmosphere of trust and mutual Respect, so that all feel equally safe and valued.
- To provide a challenging and Enriching curriculum which addresses individual needs.

ASPIRE

Vision:

*Woolgrove School* seeks to respond positively to the challenge of change and build on its reputation for successful innovation in the field of special education by:-

- Being a self-evaluating school as a means of constantly improving the quality of education and raising pupils’ achievements.
- Continuing to ensure CPD is given a high profile in order to develop staff expertise and raise standards.
- Providing an appropriate education for a growing number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and speech and language disorders.
- Maintaining the identity of Woolgrove as a school for pupils with a moderate learning difficulty at the same time evolving to meet the needs of the ever changing pupil role.
- Working in partnership with other mainstream schools to develop the Outreach Service and meaningful integration projects to promote inclusion and benefit all pupils.
- Being a beacon school and working in partnership with other mainstream and special schools, both within the County and beyond, in order to raise standards.
- Extending the school day in line with Government proposals to ensure all pupils receive their entitlement to extra curricular activities.
2: School Context

The characteristics of our school

A brief description of our school and its community setting:

Woolgrove is an innovative and highly regarded special school, which was opened in 1976 as a purpose built Primary School for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties. It is situated in spacious grounds on the edge of Letchworth Garden City. The school serves the northern area of Hertfordshire and pupils come from Letchworth, Hitchin, Baldock, Royston, Stevenage and the surrounding villages. The school has expanded to cater for 110 pupils, in 11 classes, one of which is an Autism Base. The Base opened in January 1996 and moved into purpose built accommodation in May 2001. The school provides for pupils with a complex range of needs including autistic spectrum disorders.

For 20 years, Woolgrove has operated an Outreach Service, which offers practical help to local schools in meeting the needs of pupils who have learning difficulties. The school has a Special Needs Resource Centre and runs INSET courses on all aspects of special needs.

The school has an outstanding record for reintegrating pupils into mainstream education. There is close liaison with the Valley School in Stevenage to which the majority of pupils transfer.

Woolgrove offers exceptional opportunities for continuing professional development and it is through the expertise and commitment of our staff that pupils are given the opportunity to grow in self esteem and confidence.

In November 2006, Woolgrove received an ‘Outstanding’ OFSTED inspection. The inspection highlighted Woolgrove’s ability to put the child at the heart of everything it does and enable the pupil to have a voice.

If you would like more information about the school, please visit our website at www.woolgrove.herts.sch.uk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Breakdown (number and %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pupils</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>25% Female 75% Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of staff</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>94.9% Female 5.09% Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of governors</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66.66% Female 33.33% Male.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious character</td>
<td>ND</td>
<td>Broadly Christian Ethos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils eligible for FME</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disabled staff</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Disabled pupils (SEN/LDD)</td>
<td></td>
<td>All pupils have a Statement of SEN</td>
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<tr>
<td>BME pupils</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BME staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupils who speak English as an</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average attendance rate</td>
<td>94.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant partnerships, extended provision, etc.</td>
<td>Woolgrove forms part of the local extended school consortium. Outreach.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Awards, accreditations, specialist status | 2000 Schools Curriculum Award  
2001 Schools Achievement Award, Beacon Status  
2005 Inclusion Quality Mark  
2005 National Mentoring Award  
2006 Investment in People (reviewed)  
2006 Basic Skills Quality Mark  
2006 Healthy Schools Award  
2006 ICT Quality Mark  
2006 Foundation Stage Quality Mark  
2006 Active Gold Sports Award  
2007 Foundation Stage Quality Mark  
2007 Artsmark Gold Award  
2007 Ofsted Outstanding School Award  
2008 Re-accredited with Inclusion Quality Mark  
2008 Activemark Award  
2009 Re-accredited with Basic Skills Quality Mark  
2009 Re-accredited with ICT Quality Mark |

**Current situation**

Children need to be helped to understand that while everyone is different, all are equally important. This means that everyone has an equal right to be included in a full range of activities, and not to live in fear of being hurt, bullied or insulted.

Through assemblies, direct teaching, formal and informal discussions, as well as by example, the following behaviour is encouraged:

- Being kind to everyone
- Not hurting anyone
- Not calling people names.

Children may need help in thinking about not rejecting people or treating them differently because they are:

- Older or younger  
- Bigger or smaller  
- Richer or poorer  
- Paler or darker  
- Male or female  
- Able or less able.

Instead these differences are acknowledged and valued.

Staff give similar opportunities to girls and boys. For instance, girls can choose to play football – boys netball, if they prefer to do so.

Discrimination in any form can occur occasionally and intermittently, or it may be something which some people experience all the time. Racial incidents are recorded by the head teacher. They are discussed with the children concerned, and if there is any repetition, with the parents. In the history of the school, racial incidents have been extremely rare.
The standard procedures and processes of our school – disability

Our accessibility policy is in place and reviewed annually. All pupils are assessed on entry to Woolgrove and their progress carefully monitored.

The standard procedures and processes of our school – gender

We have not noticed any significant differences in progress relating to gender. All pupils regardless of their gender are given the opportunity to take part in all areas of the curriculum. For example, we are looking to support girls and maths particularly with Space, Shape and Measure as the cohort have achieved slightly below boys in this area.

The standard procedures and processes of our school – race

Any racial incidents are recorded and taken seriously and addressed appropriately. We have a teacher within school responsible for EAL. All pupils receive individual support. Staff have recently undergone cultural diversity training. We provide a culturally diverse curriculum that prepares children for life in a diverse society which is representative of the rich diversity found in Britain.

The standard procedures and processes of our school – community cohesion

We believe that it is important to develop community cohesion in many ways – through the children, the school community, the local community, the UK community and the global community.

By community cohesion we mean working towards a society in which:

• There is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities;
• The diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued;
• Similar life opportunities are available to all; and
• Strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

The curriculum at Woolgrove includes the opportunity to learn about different faiths and cultures. We develop pupils' social skills through the use of assemblies, PHSEC and the SEAL materials. Developing pupils’ awareness of others and the world around them is ongoing in all aspects of the curriculum using a cross-curricular approach. We celebrate the diverse heritage of our pupils through the use of displays and look at both the similarities and differences between our culture and other people’s.

Planning is personalised and differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils, taking into account preferred learning styles, EAL, special educational needs and other relevant factors. We have a Family Link Worker who works closely with parents/carers and extended schools services. Staff and governors at Woolgrove are strongly committed to building positive relationships with pupils, the school community and the wider community. We are flexible in our approach to ensure inclusion of hard-to-reach parents at school events. For example, we have altered the times of our parents’ evenings and curriculum evenings and
changed them to afternoons to allow more parents to attend. Staff have arranged or provided transport for some parents to enable them to come to the annual pantomime or parents’ evenings.

A team of staff and governors, including the Community Cohesion governor, meet termly to review and plan good practice. The school has a Community Cohesion Officer who liaises with the wider community to develop positive relationships and build good community relations. The Outreach department works with over one hundred mainstream schools in North Hertfordshire and a range of multi-professional agencies to support the inclusion of pupils through training, resources and in-reach.

The Community Cohesion Audit Plan states in fuller detail the wide range of things that Woolgrove School does to develop Community Cohesion. Our International Policy covers aims and objectives for teaching our pupils global awareness and developing meaningful links with groups and schools overseas.

3: Legal Background

The duties that underpin our scheme

Our school is committed to meeting its public sector statutory duties as detailed below. We understand that the duties apply to service delivery and employment and staff management as well as policy development and implementation.

General duties

Disability general duty – Disability Discrimination Act 2005
We have a statutory duty to carry out our functions with due regard to the need to:
- promote equality of opportunity
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability-related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage disabled people’s participation in public life
- take steps to take into account people’s disabilities

Gender general duty – Sex Discrimination Act as amended by the Equality Act 2006
We have a statutory duty to promote gender equality with due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful sex discrimination; and
- promote equality of opportunity and good relations between women and men, girls and boys

Race general duty – Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
We have a statutory duty to promote race equality with due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity; and
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups

Community cohesion duty – Education and Inspections Act 2006
In addition to addressing the duties outlined above, our school is committed to taking action on other equality strands (e.g. religion and belief, ‘vulnerable’ children) and we will also work hard to meet the duty to promote community cohesion. We will increase our focus on helping children and young people to learn to understand others, to value diversity whilst also promoting shared values, to promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them, and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action. We are committed to following DfES guidance in providing:

- teaching and curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values, and builds pupils' understanding of the diversity that surrounds them
- lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- a programme of curriculum-based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through fieldwork, visits and meetings with members of different communities
- support for pupils for whom English is an additional language to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level in English.
4: Roles and Responsibilities

Woolgrove School is committed to:

• being proactive in promoting good relationships and equality of opportunity across all aspects of school life and the wider community;
• encouraging, supporting and enabling all pupils and staff to reach their potential and make a positive contribution;
• working in partnership with families, the local authority (LA) and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and tackle discrimination ensuring that our Equality and Diversity Policy is followed.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body

It is the Governing Body’s responsibility to:

• ensure that the school complies with equality legislation;
• meet requirements to publish equality schemes;
• 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;
• 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 pro-active in recruiting high quality applicants from under represented groups.

The Headteacher

It is the headteacher’s responsibility to:

• Implement 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 many cases of discriminatory practice;
• Deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with LA guidance;
• Ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the school’s equality and diversity policy;
• Produce a report on progress for governors annually.
All Staff

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 on grounds of race, gender, religion, age 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.

Breaches of the Policy

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body and LA as required.
5: Stakeholder Consultation

Policy Planning and Review

Whilst we have a duty to develop and publish equality schemes in relation to both
gender and diversity, we at Woolgrove School are considering all aspects of
diversity and equality in this comprehensive policy to be extended by the School
Development Plan in relation to access, gender and race equality covering a
three year period.

Policy Planning and Development

- in the planning and development stage of policy making, we will ensure we
  have consulted and taken into account stakeholder views;
- all improvement plans will be designed with an element of impact
  assessment built in to monitor the success of each activity;
- there will be a systematic review of the impact of all policies and procedures
  on equality and diversity to address any areas of inequality. (e.g. achievement
  and attainment to ensure progress for all especially in relation to any identified
  disadvantaged groups; attendance and exclusion data will be reviewed to ensure
  no over-representation of any one group.
- our target setting processes ensure appropriate, challenging targets are set
  in relation to identifiable groups as well as individual pupils/cohorts.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

- each pupil’s progress is monitored and tracked. The resulting data is
  analysed in respect of gender, race, ability or additional needs, looked after
  status;
- in addition to monitoring to rule out any potential disadvantage, quality
  assurance procedures ensure the school meets its duty to positively
  promote diversity. (e.g. lesson observations record evidence of
differentiation and texts are reviewed to ensure appropriateness and
inclusivity;
- the data collected is used to inform further school planning, target setting
  and decision making.
6: Our School’s Equality Priorities

Key priorities for action

These are detailed in the School Development Plan.

Partnership with Parents and the rest of the Community

• Outreach
• OSHL
• Integration
• Community Cohesion

Achievements and Standards

• Assessment package.

Personal Development and Well Being

• Complex needs
• Pupils’ voice
• SEAL/PSHEC

Quality of Provision

• Speaking and Listening
• ASC

Leadership and Management

• ECM Agenda.

Reviewed July 2009