



## Single Equalities Policy and Action Plan

*Working together to make a real and lasting difference.....*

### Vision

Our vision is to work together in partnership to make a real and lasting difference to the lives, learning and opportunities of all young children and their families.

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors of Whitegate Nursery School and Early Years Care (referred to as school) to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community.

These include:

- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents/carers
- The governing body
- Multi-agency staff linked to the school
- Visitors to school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At Whitegate, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

OFSTED report for the Nursery School in 2012 states:

*'Disabled children and those with special educational needs make exceptional progress. They are fully included in activities. Some learn to share and to use signs to communicate and equipment to enable them to enjoy all the activities available.'*

In 2019 OFSTED said:

*'You never stand still and, working with your staff, are always looking for ways to continually improve. For example, to meets the needs of specific children, you and your*



*staff are involved in research projects centring on autistic spectrum disorder and mastery in mathematics. To help children manage their feelings and behaviour more effectively your staff team is training in techniques to support conflict resolution’.*

Ofsted said in 2023:

*Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enjoy learning at school. They achieve well. This is because the school is determined that all children gain a successful start to their education*

The most recent inspection stated:

*The support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school. (2025)*

## **School Context**

Whitegate is an average sized Nursery school situated in Padiham. The school can accommodate up to 160 children aged between 2 and 5 years. The school supports an onsite separately registered voluntary management committee led daycare (EYC).

Padiham is a district of Burnley which historically was a small and fairly prosperous manufacturing town. Manufacturing industries have closed or relocated and this has seen the retail and commercial centre of Padiham deteriorate and unemployment and workless families increase considerably. Padiham families and those accessing school are primarily white British. However each year we tend to have between 2-6 families from different ethnic backgrounds.

Community Deprivation is high with 67% of the pupils living in households in top 25% Deprivation (E & E\*) - LSIP 22-23. Deprivation of families attending school has seen a significant upward trend of 10% over previous years. Around 35% of children are eligible for EYPP.

The number of children accessing FEE2 has decreased since the working families funding was introduced in April 2023. A number of families are requesting flexibility of sessions and additional hours which they self fund and this supports parents back into work or education. The school has also begun to accommodate some 2 year olds in school who are not eligible for funding but are fee paying parents to ensure the offer to families is equitable.

The school continues to support a significant number of pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school accommodates a significant number of families accessing 30 hours of Government funding.

## **School Ethos**



At Whitegate nursery school, we are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups and preventing unlawful discrimination. We equally value all children, families, staff and school users regardless of ethnicity, age, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or status, gender or disability (we follow the guidelines outlined in the Disability Act 1995).

There is an openness of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school. All within the school community will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour, e.g. through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions. We ensure all children and families feel included and are not discriminated against, and all users are listened to and respected.

All staff welcome families and there is a friendly ethos from the moment anyone enters the school. Pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect and to show visitors around their environment. The displays around the school are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored. The resources provided for the children reflect the diversity of the local area and the school community. Additional resources are available to support children where necessary (e.g. bilingual books and pens). Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning for example, discovery displays and making links with other Early Years settings. Our local offer is published on the website in line with the SEND reforms September 2014.

Whitegate School promotes equality of opportunity for all employees and users of its services (please see Whitegate School Recruitment, Induction and Retention Policy and Procedure). We aim to ensure that no job applicant, employee or service user receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of:

- race
- ethnic or national origin
- religion and belief
- gender
- marital status
- gender reassignment
- sexual orientation
- disability
- age
- pregnancy and maternity

Treating people equally may mean treating people differently. Therefore the school's policies, procedures and practices do not discriminate, but take into account differences in life experiences, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the above aims are promoted and integrated into all School activities. All Staff are required to become familiar with the Equalities Policy during their induction (please see Induction Policy).



At Whitegate we are committed to working in partnership with parents and other agencies. Each staff member is required to be aware of individual staff roles and responsibilities. All pupils/staff/parents/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination. We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support.

## **Policy Development**

This policy applies to the whole school community. It is reviewed and adapted based on our knowledge of the needs of our community. We consistently strive to gain the thoughts and opinions of:

- Parents / school users
- Staff experiences and supervisions
- Senior leadership team and governors analysing demographic data and what we know about the community

## **Monitoring and Review**

Whitegate is an inclusive school, working towards greater equality in the whole school community. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil her or his potential.

There is a consistently high expectation for all children regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light. The School follows the principles of the EYFS and all staff members will ensure that meeting the individual needs of all children lies at the heart of everything that we do.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary. Some of the groups we monitor include:

- Gender
- Early Years Pupil Premium
- 2FEE
- More able
- SEND



Resources are available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance information.

School performance information is compared to national data and local authority data, to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances.

As well as monitoring pupil performance information, we also regularly monitor a range of other information. This relates to:

- Attendance
- Exclusions and truancy
- Racism, prejudice against disability, sexism, homophobia and all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in Extended Learning Opportunities

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and provide specific support as required, including referral to other agencies such as CFWs (Children and Family Wellbeing). This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups in order to make necessary improvements.

Whitegate School is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. We aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and establish a governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to respect and respond to the diverse needs of our population.

We collect and analyse a range of profile information for our staff and governors:

- skills of staff (workforce census) and governors
- training attended
- disciplinary and grievance cases,
- staff supervision and appraisal
- exit interviews

This information is viewed as confidential and records are securely maintained with limited access of the Senior Leadership Team.

Due regard is given to the promotion of equality in the School Improvement Plan. The person responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the policy and action plan is the Head teacher. Her role is to:

- Lead discussions, organise training, update staff in staff meetings, support discussions



- Work with the governing body on matters relating to equality
- Support evaluation activities that moderate the impact and success of this policy

### **Developing best practice**

We deliver personalised learning and care for children's individual needs in order to provide the best possible start in life. Planning takes into consideration the life experiences of each child. The focus is on removing barriers for children where these already exist. Individual needs are identified and responded to early (see SEN policy) and Whitegate places high priority on the provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessing their attainment and progress and planning opportunities for further development. Children who are Gifted and Talented are given appropriate challenges through individual key person planning with support from the Nursery Teacher, EYC Team Leader and SENCO. Children who are Looked After will have a Personal Education Plan.

We promote positive attitudes to diversity and differences with all children, through planning for individuals, all practitioners valuing the contribution of every child and family, providing positive images of diversity through carefully chosen resources and images, to value different aspects of their own and other people's lives. Whitegate nursery school provides an environment in which all pupils have equal access to all facilities and resources. All pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning. A range of teaching methods are to be used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils. Consideration is given to the physical learning environment – both indoors and outdoors, including displays and signage.

All practitioners actively avoid stereotyping and positively challenge any expression of prejudice or discrimination, by children or adults. This includes the use of appropriate language that:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- Does not offend
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- Uses accurate language in referring to particular groups or individuals and challenges in instances where this is not the case

All practitioners model respectful attitudes to all. This is also true for parents and school users who will be challenged (see 'code of conduct' policy and 'Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools: November 14). Staff have attended training in July 2015 and September 2016 to support their understanding and promotion of fundamental british values: democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance throughout the nursery among other staff, with children and families.



All children are listened to and respected. If practitioners have any concerns about a child they are to follow the School's Safeguarding Policy (please see Safeguarding Policy and Procedures).

Parents and members of the local community are encouraged to play a full role and be involved in the life of the school.

We have an effective and robust approach to supporting children's interactions and promoting positive behaviour which all Practitioners follow. This policy views all behaviour as learning opportunities and children are supported to resolve conflicts for themselves from a young age. The situation is handled in a calm manner and voices are not raised. The child is still made to feel supported and not demeaned in any way (please see Supporting Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy).

At Whitegate school, we aim to ensure that:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity
- Pupils will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural, backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles

### **Provision for Bi-lingual Pupils**

We undertake at Whitegate Nursery School to make appropriate provision for all EAL/bi-lingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. This is only a very small group within the school, on average 1-2 children each year. These groups may include:

- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils
- Children who are advanced bi-lingual learners
- Children who use first language effectively for learning

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Our governing body will ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan. The head teacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the governing body.

The head teacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this policy. Our staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge



inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues. All members of the school community have a responsibility to treat each other with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour. We will take steps to ensure all visitors to the school adhere to our commitment to equality

### **Commissioning and Procurement**

All volunteers/ students are involved in an induction which emphasises the school commitment to equality of opportunity. All contractors to the school are required to comply with equality legislation as part of the Lancashire County Council tendering process. All contractors are required to complete an initial induction when our commitment to equality of opportunity is discussed.

### **Measurement of Impact of the Policy**

This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on pupils, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. An action plan will be published to enable an impact assessment to be undertaken at the appropriate time within a given timescale.

### **Publicizing the Policy and Plan**

We are committed to equality and the policy and plan is made available to as many of the school users as possible. The policy is available on our website and hard copies are available to anyone who wishes to receive a copy. We remind parents through newsletters, brochures and induction meetings of our commitment and make copies available.

### **Annual Review of Progress**

This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on children, staff, parents and carers, school users and volunteers / students from the different groups that make up our school. An action plan will be published to enable an impact assessment to be undertaken at the appropriate time within a given timescale.

### **Equality Impact Analysis**

Whitegate Nursery School will undertake equality impact analysis at the start of each academic year and make further considerations at each intake to predict and assess the implications of the policy based upon the make up of the current cohort of children. This will



consist of an assessment of the demographics of the cohort and any children at risk of disadvantage will be identified and monitored throughout their time at the school.

This will enable Whitegate Nursery School to analyse all of our work to ensure it meets the needs of all our children and families and that no group is disadvantaged or unable to access our school due to their ethnicity, disability, gender, age, religion and belief, and sexual orientation).



## **Single Equalities Action Plan 2025-2026**

There are specific duties which schools have to undertake in relation to the Equality Act 2010:

- a) to publish information which shows they have due regard for equalities, as defined by the Act;
- b) to publish at least one equality objective.

### **Evaluation of objective for 2024-2025**

#### **To complete the Linking Project with Bradley nursery school in Nelson**

This project was completed with our 3-4 year old children linking with children from Bradley nursery school.

The children sent information about themselves (All about me's) and created bunting for each other's classrooms. They even had chance to see each others' nursery classrooms using Microsoft Teams video conferencing. The project culminated in a joint trip to the Youth Theatre in Burnley where the children were arranged into groups with their new friends and completed music and drama activities. This project gave children from Whitegate the opportunity to find out about and spend time with children from another school with a different community to that of Padiham and it was very successful.

### **Objective for 2025-26**

**To evaluate the impact of interventions provided for EYPP children, using qualitative and quantitative data to evidence.**