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## Windrush Valley School

### Policy Documents Annual Review Record

<b>Citation</b>	This document shall be cited as: <a href="#">Anti-Bullying Policy (including child-on-child Abuse and Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence)</a> And linked to the following policies <a href="#">Behaviour and discipline Policy</a> <a href="#">Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy</a> <a href="#">ICT Acceptable Use Policy</a> <a href="#">Allegation Management Policy</a> <a href="#">Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure</a> <a href="#">Positive Handling Policy</a>
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<b>Comments to</b>	Headteacher
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<b>Source/author</b>	Lucy Maudsley Amanda Douglas
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<b>Governor's Review</b>	31st January 2024



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## **Anti-Bullying Policy (including Child-on-child Abuse and Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence)**

### **Introduction**

This policy applies to all children including those in the EYFS.

The policy has been written in response to the following updated guidance and reviews, and the listed documents have informed this policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023
- ISI Commentary September 2022– Part 3 Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) September 2021
- Working together to safeguard children 2018 (2023 update)
- “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” (Gov.uk July 2017)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/623895/Preventing\\_and\\_tackling\\_bullying\\_advice.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf)
- “Cyberbullying: Advice for head teachers and school staff” (Gov.uk November 2014)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying\\_Advice\\_for\\_Headteachers\\_and\\_School\\_Staff\\_1211\\_14.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_1211_14.pdf)
- Equality Act 2010

### **Statement of intent**

At Windrush Valley School we strive to establish a community in which everyone feels valued and safe and where legitimate individual differences are respected, appreciated, understood and accepted. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation and all pupils should care for, and support one another.

### **Aims**

We constantly work to prevent bullying (this includes child-on-child abuse and sexual violence and sexual harassment) by developing a School ethos where a zero-tolerance approach is paramount and acknowledge that even where there are no reported cases, this does not mean it is not happening.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any incidents that may occur. We aim to make all those connected with the School aware of our opposition to bullying and we make clear each person’s responsibilities with regard to the eradication and management of such incidents in our School. Parents are expected to support the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our School.

### **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is a deliberate, hurtful action, usually repeated over time, but single incidents or actions will also be considered. It will involve one or more children intentionally hurting another pupil or group, either physically, verbally or emotionally (including cyberbullying).

Bullying is unwanted behaviour that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power.

It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups; for example, through acts of a racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic nature or against those with special educational needs and disability; or because a child is adopted or a carer. It may occur directly or indirectly through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).

The School recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can be disproportionately impacted by incidents like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs. It recognises that communication barriers and difficulties need to be overcome in order to ensure the safety and welfare of such children.

### **The main acts of bullying are:**

- Physical abuse (hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- Indirect (spreading rumors, excluding someone from social groups)
- Cyber (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).
- Sexual harassment (inappropriate touching, sharing of nudes or sexual name calling)

### **Prejudiced Behaviour**

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

These can be defined as:

**Homophobic/Biphobic bullying:** when people behave or speak in a way which makes someone feel bullied because of their actual or perceived sexuality. People may be a target of this type of bullying because of their appearance, behaviour, physical traits or because they have friends or family who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning or possibly just because they are seen as being different. Find out more about Homophobic/Biphobic bullying from Bullying UK

**Identity based bullying:** children and young people are too often bullied in schools because of their (or family and friends') race, faith, gender, disability, sexual orientation or trans status, irrespective of whether those differences are real or perceived. All schools have to show due regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) (Appendix 3). This means our school will actively consider this duty when reviewing evidence of bullying at school to ensure that

efforts to prevent and tackle discriminatory bullying are targeted and effective. The PSED covers those with 'relevant protected characteristics': age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Find out more about Identity based bullying from the Anti-bullying Alliance

Discrimination can come in one of the following forms:

- direct discrimination - treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others;
- indirect discrimination - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage;
- harassment - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them;
- victimisation - treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment.

Race and Faith targeted bullying: bullying that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be racist or bullying that targets a person's faith. All incidents of racist bullying constitute a racist incident. However not all racist incidents would constitute racist bullying. Find out more about Race and Faith targeted bullying at <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

SEND bullying: disabled children, those with SEN, or students who have friends or family who are disabled or have special education needs, are more likely to experience bullying in school. Find out more about SEND bullying at <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

Sexual bullying: any bullying behaviour, whether physical or non-physical, that is based on a person's sexuality or gender. It is when sexuality or gender is used as a weapon by boys or girls towards other boys or girls – although it is more commonly directed at girls. It can be carried out to a person's face, behind their back or through the use of technology. Find out more about Sexual bullying at <https://www.beyondbullying.com/>

Transphobic bullying: bullying based on prejudice or negative attitudes, views or beliefs about trans people. Transphobic bullying affects young people who are trans, or because they have friends or family who are, but can also affect those questioning their gender identity as well as students who are not trans but do not conform to gender stereotypes. Find out more about Transphobic bullying at <https://www.beyondbullying.com/>

Hate crime: there is no legal definition of a hate crime. However, the police and the CPS have an agreed definition of hate crime as: any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.

### **Signs of Bullying**

A person may indicate by signs or behaviours that they are being bullied. Everyone should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if the person:

- Is frightened of, or unwilling to come to school

- Changes their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Change in focus/attainment at school
- Has possessions that are damaged or 'go missing'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received

### **Definition of Child-on-child Abuse**

- Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children, and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships, and wider peer associations. Child-on-child abuse can happen both inside and outside of school or online.
- Online child-on-child abuse is any form of child-on-child abuse with a digital element, for example, sexting, online abuse, coercion and exploitation, child-on-child grooming, threatening language delivered via online means, the distribution of sexualised content, and harassment.

### **Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. Children's sexual behaviours exist on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to highly abnormal and abusive. We recognise the importance of distinguishing between problematic and abusive sexual behaviour. The Brook 'Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool' is used by all staff to decide whether the behaviour is green, amber or red.

In relation to any reports or disclosures of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children we will:

- make it clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- challenge behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and other private areas of the body.

Ultimately any decisions on how to proceed with an allegation of sexual violence and sexual

harassment will be made on a case by case basis with the DSL (or deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the Police as required.

Some situations, however, are statutorily clear:

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape;
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are defined in law; and
- creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal (This includes children making and sharing sexual images and videos of themselves).

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

Children's experiences of abuse and violence are rarely isolated events, and they can often be linked to other things that are happening in their lives and spaces in which they spend their time. Any response to bullying / child-on-child abuse therefore needs to consider the range of possible types of bullying / child-on-child abuse set out above and capture the full context of children's experiences. This can be done by adopting a 'contextual safeguarding' approach and by ensuring that our response to incidents of bullying (including child-on-child abuse and sexual harassment and sexual violence) takes in to account any potential complexity.

This Policy and procedures encapsulate a contextual safeguarding approach, which:

- is an approach to safeguarding children that recognises their experiences of significant harm in extra-familial contexts and seeks to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment and intervention safeguarding activities;
- recognises that as children enter adolescence they spend increasing amounts of time outside of the home in public environments (including on the internet) within which they may experience abuse; and
- considers interventions to change the systems or social conditions of the environments in which abuse has occurred.

### **Preventative measures (including Cyberbullying)**

Strategies we use to prevent bullying include: education through PSHE lessons; the Dragon Master reward system; a worry box or monster in each classroom; focus themed assemblies; encouraging parents to report incidents to the school immediately and supervision during playtimes and movement around the school. Through PSHE, children receive a comprehensive program relating to feeling safe, both in the real world and online and learn of strategies they can use when they feel unsafe, and who they can talk to. Children are encouraged to speak out about incidents of bullying and child-on-child abuse and inform an adult as soon as possible. Parents are encouraged to communicate any incidents of bullying and child-on-child abuse in school. These may have been reported to them by a child, but may be unknown to adults in school. The importance of feeling a sense of belonging to our school and taking responsibility for caring for each other is emphasised.

The School uses CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System) a communication system to alert all staff of any low-level emerging concerns or communications relating to all children, of which all staff should be aware. This is updated as and when relevant with staff being alerted on a need to know basis. CPOMS incidents are reviewed by the SLT on a weekly basis.

## **Responsibilities**

### **The role of the Headteacher**

The Headteacher sets the School climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying and child-on-child abuse less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, such incidents are far less likely to be part of their behaviour. The Headteacher implements the School's anti-bullying strategy and ensures that all staff, through induction and training, are aware of the school's policy and know how to deal with incidents. The Headteacher responds immediately to any report, or a request from a parent to investigate an incident, and investigates the case prior to reporting back to the parents. In cases of severe and persistent incidents, the Headteacher will use sanctions; including if necessary, exclusion and referral if necessary to the police or children's social care. (see Appendix 1)

### **The role of the teacher**

Teachers support all children in their class to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying. Where an incident does occur, the class teacher or member of staff dealing with the incident will need to collect all the relevant information and record a detailed account, informing the Head at the first opportunity. Time is spent talking to the perpetrator(s): explaining why the action was wrong. We endeavor to help the child change their behaviour in future. Where appropriate, teachers may attend training, which enables them to become better equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

### **The role of parents**

Parents have a responsibility to support the School's Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the School. Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator; either in or out of school, are encouraged to contact their child's class teacher immediately.

### **Procedures for Dealing with reported Bullying (including child-on-child abuse and sexual harassment and sexual violence)**

Where an incident is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The following steps must be taken when dealing with any incident:

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident must be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached, or who suspects/observed it. If you witness intimidation, child-on-child abuse or sexual harassment and sexual violence, you should of course, stop it immediately.

1. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the school's Positive Handling Policy, if there is a circumstance when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard young people (reasonable force) may be needed to control or restrain a student. With regards to this policy this may be in order to break up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve

either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm.

2. When dealing with an incident, it is important to be discreet in order to protect the victim and to avoid the alleged bully from escalating their behaviour.
3. Listen. Allow the 'victim' the opportunity to tell their story. Remain calm and objective and do not display shock at what they are telling you.
4. The Head must be informed immediately either in person/via email/telephone.
5. The person dealing with the incident will need to collect all the relevant information and then record a detailed account on CPOMS the '**Bullying /child-on-child Abuse / Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Abuse Form**', including the '**Statement of Fact**' form, recording statements from all individuals involved (Appendix 2). Then recorded on CPOMS.
6. The Head will speak to all the students involved separately, gain a statement of facts from each of them and use consistent language and open questions for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the students to tell you what happened.
7. When investigating an incident, do not interrupt the student. At the end of the statement if it is necessary to gain clarity, ask open questions, 'where, when, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?) Avoid asking 'why' as often the reason won't be known but it also can be seen as apportioning blame. Instead, use the phrase 'what was the reason for...?'.
  - a. What was the explanation by all students involved?
  - b. Can each of the students give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the students involved?
  - c. Is the version of one student different from another and why?
  - d. What is each of the student's own understanding of what occurred?
  - e. Do the students know/understand what they are doing?
  - f. Is the student's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour?
  - g. Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived?
  - h. Does the student have an understanding, of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?
8. Staff need to consider:

In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from the DSL.

All of the collated information MUST then be passed to the Headteacher who can then make an informed decision moving forward.

9. Never leave students to 'work things out for themselves'.
10. All relevant parties (including parents) will be kept informed of what has happened and what action has been taken by the Head. All teachers will be asked to monitor the situation.
11. Sanctions will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned. It is important that the student responsible for initiating the bullying is dealt with



appropriately. **(See Appendix 1 for sanctions)**

Allegations against a member of staff will be dealt with through the school's Allegation Management Policy.

12. The school will endeavour to respond through restorative practice in order to resolve issues between students. This means that those who have been harmed are able to convey the impact of the harm to those responsible, and for those responsible to acknowledge this impact and take steps to put it right. Each incident will be individually reviewed to ascertain the nature of the bullying and if prejudice-related bullying is apparent then the implementation of a tailored programme may be required, to develop greater understanding, for the perpetrator.
13. The school may also refer any child involved for further pastoral support, to focus on aspects of behaviour or self-esteem.
14. It is important that following the incident the students involved continue to feel supported and receive help, even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the students do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the students following the incident(s) are imperative. The school will also monitor the situation to ensure that bullying does not reoccur.
15. When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' then this incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, staff should report directly to the DSL in person who will report their concerns to the local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action.
16. External support can be given to pupils whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the school may need to draw on a range of external services to support the student who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a student engaging in bullying.
17. Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, gov.uk sets out bullying incidents that should, where discovered, be reported to the police because they are illegal. These may include:
  - sexual violence/harassment
  - violence or assault;
  - theft;
  - repeated harassment; intimidation; or communications, e.g. name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, [the Malicious Communications Act 1988](#), the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986;
  - hate crimes.
18. The SLT has the additional responsibility to monitor incidents on CPOMS and look for patterns of behaviour that need addressing. The outcome will be fed into the PSHE and assembly program if necessary, and if required, amendments made to the supervision of pupils.

19. There will be a weekly analysis of incidents taken from CPOMS and interventions carried out, in order to continually improve practice which will be shared with the Governing Body.

**For further information**

- Cyber Bullying, -DfE Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff 2014.
- Bullying- Preventing and Tackling Bullying DFE 2017
- <https://www.beyondbullying.com/>
- <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>
- Appendix 3; The Equality Duty

**Monitoring**

The Headteacher and DSL monitors CPOMS on a weekly basis and analyses the information with regard to gender, age, SEND and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents. The Proprietor monitors the effectiveness of this policy on an annual basis.

Amanda Douglas  
Headteacher  
31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

## APPENDIX 1

### Ladder of Sanctions – Bullying / Child-on-child Abuse / Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence

At all points on the ladder, due consideration will be given to teaching the perpetrator why their behaviour was wrong alongside the sanction. Punishment alone will not be enough to prevent recurring bullying.

**ALL** incidents of bullying must be reported on CPOMS.

LEVEL 1	CONSEQUENCE	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Single act or isolated incident of bullying where there is an imbalance of power between perpetrator and victim</li> </ul>	Time out and (discretionary) communication with parents	Time Out of lunchtime playtime. Informal communication with parents.
LEVEL 2	CONSEQUENCE	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Single act or isolated incident of bullying [where there is an imbalance of power between perpetrator and victim] is repeated by the same perpetrator but the victims are different.</li> </ul>	Removal of privilege or free time and an Official Warning to parents	Headteacher will speak to the child. Parents will be called to meet with the class teacher and/or Headteacher to discuss next steps.  Next steps will be in-school detention at a set time involving restorative activities (minimum of 2 lunchtime plays) AND/OR Inclusion on school trips, extra-curricular activities and representing the school at event, will be restricted.
LEVEL 3	CONSEQUENCE	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Continued Level 2 incidents.</li> <li>➤ Sexual Harrassment or Sexual Violence.</li> <li>➤ Racist or homophobic incident</li> <li>➤ Physical violence towards others, including adults</li> <li>➤ Biting or hurting others with an object.</li> <li>➤ Incident that endangers self or others.</li> <li>➤ Aggressive threats of violence towards a child or adult.</li> <li>➤ Verbal abuse.</li> <li>➤ Any other incident that affects the 9 protected characteristics of race, disability, gender, age, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.</li> </ul>	Headteacher's detention AND On a behaviour report	Parents will always be called in for all Level 3 incidents to the Headteacher.  Parents informed of detention with the Headteacher involving restorative activities. AND Exclusion from school trips, and/or extra-curricular activities and/or representing the school at events (To be decided by the HT as appropriate). AND/OR A referral to the police or children's social care.
LEVEL 4	CONSEQUENCE	SANCTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Repeated incidents whilst on a Behaviour Report</li> </ul>	Personal Behaviour Plan	Headteacher to meet with Head of Pastoral care and Parents. PBP will be drawn up together with pupil.
LEVEL 5	CONSEQUENCE	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Repeated incidents whilst on a Behaviour Plan</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>	Suspension or permanent exclusion	To be decided by the HT

**BULLYING / CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE / SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE  
FORM**

To be completed and uploaded to **CPOMS** once a suspected/alleged incident has been witnessed or reported

Child's name	
Year group	
Type of bullying	
Date of incident	
Name of person reporting the incident	
Names of all involved	
Details of the incident	
Where took place	
What time	
What allegedly happened	
Who witnessed it	
Any other relevant information (if necessary)	
Name of staff involved	

Name of staff reporting alleged incident		Date
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**STATEMENT OF FACT FORM (ALL INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED)**



NAME

DATE TIME

NAME

DATE TIME

NAME

DATE TIME

NAME

DATE TIME

## The equality duty

## APPENDIX 3

The equality duty was developed in order to harmonise the equality duties and to extend it across the protected characteristics. It consists of a general equality duty, supported by specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation. In summary, those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are sometimes referred to as the three aims or arms of the general equality duty. The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

The equality duty covers the nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status. This means that the first aim of the duty applies to this characteristic but that the other aims (advancing equality and fostering good relations) do not apply.

### Purpose of the duty

The broad purpose of the equality duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the day-to-day business of public authorities. If you do not consider how a function can affect different groups in different ways, it is unlikely to have the intended effect. This can contribute to greater inequality and poor outcomes. The general equality duty therefore requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected into the design of policies and the delivery of services, including internal policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.

Compliance with the general equality duty is a legal obligation, but it also makes good business sense. An organisation that is able to provide services to meet the diverse needs of its users should find that it carries out its core business more efficiently. A workforce that has a supportive working environment is more productive. Many organisations have also found it beneficial to draw on a broader range of talent and to better represent the community that they

serve. It should also result in better informed decision-making and policy development. Overall, it can lead to services that are more appropriate to the user, and services that are more effective and cost-effective. This can lead to increased satisfaction with public services.