

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

**Reviewed by:** Anna Greatrex and Irena Baruch

**Review date:** June 2026

**Next review:** June 2027

**Related Policies:** SEND policy, Accessibility Plan, Curriculum policy, Assessment, feedback and marking policy

**Endorsement:** Full endorsement is given to this policy by:

Name: Joel Chalfen

Position: Waldorf Cambridge Trustee

## 1. Introduction & Rationale

At Waldorf Cambridge, we are committed to providing an inclusive, nurturing and developmentally appropriate learning environment in line with the principles of Waldorf-Steiner education. Every child is recognised as a unique individual with their own path of development, and we strive to ensure that all pupils — regardless of ability, background, language or circumstance — are supported to feel that they belong and to achieve their fullest potential.

Inclusion is embedded in our curriculum, pedagogy and pastoral care. We value diversity and are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all members of our school community, and to holding high expectations for every child.

## 2. Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that all pupils — including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL), and those requiring stretch and challenge — feel safe, valued, that they belong, and able to fully participate in the life of the school.
- Provide clear guidance on inclusive teaching, differentiated learning, reasonable adjustments and personalised support.
- Set and maintain high expectations for all pupils, and not lower expectations for any individual or group.
- Promote a culture of mutual respect and understanding, rooted in the anthroposophical understanding of human development.
- Fulfil our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014, and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

### **3. Legal and Policy Framework**

This policy is informed by the following national and local guidelines:

- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Ofsted's non-association independent school inspection toolkit
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement

We also uphold the principles and ethos of Waldorf UK (the supporting body for Waldorf-Steiner schools in the UK) and the pedagogical approach inspired by Rudolf Steiner.

### **4. Inclusion in the Steiner-Waldorf Context**

Waldorf education is founded on the understanding that every child brings their own gifts, pace, and developmental path. Inclusion in our school means:

- Meeting children where they are developmentally.
- Offering rhythm, artistic activity, and experiential learning that engages head, heart and hands.
- Avoiding early academic pressure and fostering intrinsic motivation and joy in learning.
- Recognising and supporting all learners, including those who need additional help or enrichment.

Inclusion is not a strategy added to teaching but rather it is the essence of how we teach and care for each child.

### **5. Provision for Specific Groups**

#### **a. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

We recognise that some children need additional support to access the curriculum. Our SEND provision includes:

- Early identification through observation, child study, and collaboration with parents/carers.
- A graduated response to need (Assess, Plan, Do, Review).
- Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) where appropriate.
- Reasonable adjustments, in line with the Equality Act 2010, to enable pupils to access the curriculum and the wider life of the school.
- Access to specialist support, including therapists or other professionals, when needed.
- A designated SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator) who holds appropriate status within the leadership of the school to lead whole-school improvement for pupils with SEND, oversee provision and support teachers.
- A designated EY SEND teacher to support children who need it at the earliest starting point.
- Careful support for pupils' transitions — into the school, between classes, and on to other settings or adulthood.
- Full involvement of parents/carers in planning and reviewing support.

We hold the same high expectations of pupils with SEND as of all other pupils, and we monitor their progress to ensure that the support provided is effective.

## **b. Children Known (or Previously Known) to Children's Social Care**

We recognise that looked-after children (LAC), previously looked-after children (PLAC), and other pupils known to children's social care may face additional barriers to their learning and well-being. For these pupils we:

- Ensure that each looked-after child has Individualised Education Plan (IEP) and receives high-quality support to improve their learning and well-being.
- Have a designated member of staff responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Work closely with the relevant local authority, the Virtual School Head, social workers and other professionals to plan and provide coordinated, multi-agency support.
- Use our knowledge of a pupil's circumstances to inform decisions about additional academic and pastoral support and to reduce barriers to attendance and engagement.

## **c. Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Pupils**

We are committed to reducing barriers to learning and well-being for pupils who are socioeconomically disadvantaged. We:

- Seek to understand the needs of disadvantaged pupils and draw on the best available evidence to inform our approaches.
- Make timely and effective adaptations so that these pupils can participate fully in the curriculum and the wider life of the school.
- Monitor the impact of our approaches on disadvantaged pupils' learning and experiences.

## **d. LGBTQ+**

Our school is committed to creating an environment where everyone feels valued and respected, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. We actively promote understanding and inclusion of LGBTQ+ pupils, staff, parents, and the wider community. Discrimination, bullying, or harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender reassignment will not be tolerated. Through our curriculum, pastoral care, and policies, we seek to foster a culture of equality, celebrate diversity, and ensure all members of our school community can thrive as their authentic selves.

## **e. English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

We welcome pupils for whom English is not a first language and provide tailored support to integrate them into the classroom and school life, including:

- Immersive language-rich environments grounded in storytelling, song, and a strong rhythm to the day and week.
- Opportunities to learn and practise English in both formal and informal contexts.
- Visual, artistic and kinaesthetic teaching methods that transcend language barriers.
- Cultural sensitivity and celebration of home languages and traditions.

## **f. Stretch and Challenge (More Able Pupils)**

Waldorf education seeks to inspire and deepen learning rather than accelerate it. However, we recognise that some children may demonstrate particular aptitudes or talents. We provide for these learners by:

- Differentiating tasks and questions to deepen and master thinking and knowledge.
- Providing open-ended, imaginative, and challenging projects.
- Encouraging independent and creative work, especially in the upper classes.
- Offering enrichment through artistic, musical, dramatic or practical opportunities.
- Encouraging mentorship and peer leadership roles within the classroom.

## **6. Teaching and Learning Strategies**

All class and subject teachers are responsible for delivering inclusive teaching, beginning with everyday high-quality teaching that benefits all pupils and reduces the need for individual adaptations. Key strategies include:

- High expectations for every pupil, with adaptations and reasonable adjustments made where needed rather than expectations lowered.
- Differentiation by outcome, task, or level of support.
- Maintaining clear and predictable routines.
- Using a multisensory and artistic approach to learning.
- Observational and formative assessment to inform planning.
- Ensuring that no child is excluded from classroom activities or experiences, and that all pupils feel they belong.

## **7. Staff Training and Development**

We are committed to ongoing professional development for all staff in the areas of:

- Inclusive pedagogy within the Waldorf context.
- SEND and EAL strategies.
- Supporting disadvantaged pupils and those known to children's social care.
- Child development and observation.
- Safeguarding and the emotional wellbeing of all children.

The school encourages collaborative learning among staff and the sharing of good practice.

## **8. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Inclusion is monitored through:

- Classroom observations and reviews.
- Tracking the progress of pupils with SEND, EAL learners, disadvantaged pupils and those known to children's social care, using both quantitative and qualitative information.
- Regular reviews of IEPs and provision maps.
- Regular review of the school's Accessibility Plan to ensure it meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and is implemented effectively.
- Feedback from pupils, parents and staff.
- Regular reports to the School Leadership Team and Trustees.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains up to date with legislation, school development plans, and the evolving needs of our pupils.