



**Woodlane High School**

achieving success in a nurturing environment

# **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy**

**Updated: January 2026**

**Next Update: January 2029**

**Du Cane Road London W12 0TN**

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## 1.0 Introduction

Woodlane High School is committed to providing high quality teaching and learning for our pupils. We recognise that by valuing and promoting equal opportunities in employment for all employees and job applicants and avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and delivery of services, we will be able to deliver first class education, and value the differences our workforce brings to the school.

We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit. We also value diversity and recognise the varied contributions that a diverse workforce brings to an organisation; we are committed to drawing on different perspectives and experiences of individuals, which will add value to what we do. We acknowledge intersectionality and the impact that a wide variety of differences will have on the individual and the workplace and the positive impact this range of experiences and viewpoints can have on young people growing up in a multi-cultural society.

Every member of Woodlane community is regarded as of equal worth and importance, and we ensure that we do not discriminate against staff on the basis of:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Gender definition.
- Intersex and non-binary.
- Marital or civil partner status.
- Pregnancy or maternity.
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex or sexual orientation; or
- Any combination of those listed above (the protected characteristics).

The principles of non-discrimination also apply to how we expect our staff to treat colleagues, pupils, parents and carers, visitors, clients, customers, suppliers and former staff regardless of whether the legal protection of having a protected characteristic applies.

As part of our duty we publish on our website:

- Our equality objectives as part of our yearly School Improvement Plan and actions being taken to further improve our compliance with this duty.
- A bi-annual review of our School Improvement Plan and progress towards these equality objectives.
- This policy and other associated policies linked to our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

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As part of the application of this policy, the school may collect, process, and store personal data and special categories of data in accordance with our data protection policy. We will comply with the requirements of data protection legislation, (being the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018) and any implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in relation to how we collect, hold, and share personal data. See the school's Data Policy for more information.

This policy and all associated procedures apply to all staff, including volunteers, non-directly employed agency staff, apprentices and teaching pupils on placement. It will also apply to those who attend our school to work with pupils or staff, for any reason. We will refer to all these roles as 'staff' throughout this policy. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time. Failure to comply with these policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action. Discriminatory treatment, bullying or harassment of staff or pupils by visitors will also not be tolerated.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school-wide policies: SEND Policy, Admissions Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, Exclusions Policy, Complaints Policy, Examinations Policy and the Accessibility Plan.

The following groups have been identified as key recipients in terms of the implementation of this policy:

- Looked after children or children in need.
- Children with SEND.
- Children at risk of exclusion.
- Children from an ethnic group, including those from Gypsy, Roma, Traveller background.
- Children missing in education.
- Children with medical conditions affecting attendance at school.
- School age/teenage parents.
- Young carers.
- Children within, or at risk of joining, the criminal justice system (i.e. those at risk of child criminal exploitation).
- Children with mental health issues.
- Children in receipt of free school meals.
- Children living in areas of deprivation.
- Gifted and talented children.
- Children who are questioning their gender or who have expressed a desire to be treated as non-binary or transition to a different gender from that assigned at birth.
- Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

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## 2.0 Compliance

This policy has been developed in response to the Equality Act 2010 and replaces previous policies relating to race, gender and disability equality. It has been designed to help the school meet the public sector equality duty to:

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

We will ensure that we do not discriminate against pupils on the basis of:

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy or maternity.
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex or sexual orientation.
- Any combination of those listed above (the protected characteristics).

Staff (including Governors) will:

- Actively promote equity and equality of opportunity in all areas of school life.
- Ensure that members of the school community know their rights and respect the rights of others.
- Aim to ensure that prejudice or discrimination in all its forms is actively rejected.
- Raise awareness of equity and equality issues for all members of the school community, and through our links with the local community.
- Establish strategies to ensure equal access to the curriculum and enable each individual to fulfil his/her potential regardless of ability, gender, race, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

Equality principles based on the above aims will be embedded in our daily practices, policies and the processes of decision making, including:

- Admissions, induction and attendance.
- Pupils' progress and achievement.
- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing, particularly in relation to safeguarding.
- Parental involvement.
- Working with the wider community.
- Behaviour management.
- Staff recruitment and professional development.

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- Curriculum access and participation.
- Teaching styles and strategies.

### **3.0 Publication of information and equality objectives**

Woodlane High School acknowledges its legal duties to publish information on compliance with the three strands of the public sector equality duty and, in addition, to publish specific and measurable equality objectives.

The school analyses data and existing practices to set out the actions taken in compliance of the equality duty, and to inform the setting of relevant equality objectives. These will be set out in our school improvement plan.

The information on the equality duty will be updated annually and the objectives annually. The school's improvement plan and subsequent reviews are published on the website.

### **4.0 Roles and responsibilities**

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with equality legislation. Day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy, including regular review, has been delegated to the headteacher.

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Treat colleagues, young people and visitors with dignity and respect; and avoid behaving in any manner that may give rise to claims of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- Support and participate in any measures introduced to promote equality and diversity.
- Actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage in accordance with their responsibilities.
- Report any issues associated with equality and diversity in accordance with this policy.

All senior leaders must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example, and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. All senior leaders have appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and recruitment and selection best practice.

All employees must be aware of this policy, have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and not to discriminate against or harass other people, including employees, former employees and job applicants, treating them with dignity at all times. This also applies on work-related trips or events including social events. They should also apply this to how they treat members of the public in the provision of services and should support the school in

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meeting its commitment to provide equal opportunities for all and promoting diversity in the workplace.

All pupils must share and demonstrate the school's values appropriate to their level of development and understanding, and the values required to grow in to well-rounded, conscientious citizens of a multi-cultural society. Pupils will respond appropriately and receive guidance from staff consistent with these values and learn through a clear programme designed to support development in this area.

As part of their induction, all staff members will receive training on this policy and will receive further training sessions (as required) to ensure that they remain aware of their responsibilities. Such training will:

- Ensure all staff are aware of and comply with current equalities legislation and government recommendations.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can support pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide support for staff to effectively manage any discrimination towards pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide up-to-date information on the terms, concepts and current understandings relating to each of the protected characteristics.
- Develop appropriate strategies for communication between parents, educators and pupils about any issues related to a protected characteristic.
- Ensure that the school is aware of and participates in relevant awareness days, such as Black History Month, World Disability Day, Pride, and International Women's Day.

If a member of staff has any questions about the content or application of this policy, they should contact a member of the senior leadership team to request training or further information. Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved.

## **5.0 Duty to make reasonable adjustments**

The school will actively seek to make reasonable adjustments where there is a need to ensure that a disabled person has the same access to everything as a non-disabled person, as far as is reasonable. We will take positive and proactive steps to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles faced by a disabled individual, as far as is reasonable.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments covers all aspects of school life, including the way the curriculum is taught, classroom organisation, and timetabling, access to facilities, clubs and visits, sports and policies.

In making reasonable adjustments, the school is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. Staff will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and

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will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services. On some occasions further advice may need to be sought from support agency partnerships to support a request of this type, e.g. SaLT Team.

The school will monitor the physical features of the premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users, however as a SEND school, the environment is already set up to meet the needs of the widest possible set of learners. Where possible and proportionate, the school will take steps to further improve access for disabled users of the premises. Please see the school's Accessibility Plan for further information.

All pupils admitted to Woodlane have an EHCP and the vast majority are considered disabled, (as described by the Equality Act 2010) due to their diagnosed physical or learning needs. Parents should notify the headteacher in writing if they are exploring further diagnosis related to their child's needs which may impact their status.

## **6.0 Forms of discrimination**

Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect, and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics as set out above. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay. In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. It will only be in exceptional circumstances that this will apply in our school.

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone, but puts people with a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be objectively justified.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnerships are not protected directly under the harassment provisions. However, pregnancy and maternity harassment would amount to harassment related to sex, and harassment related to civil partnership would amount to harassment related to sexual orientation.

The law protects employees, workers, contractors, self-employed staff, apprentices, those undertaking vocational training, volunteers, former workers and job applicants from sexual

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harassment and Woodlane High School has a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of its staff at work.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Flirting, gesturing, making sexual remarks about someone's appearance in any means of communication.
- Asking question about someone's sex life.
- Telling sexually offensive jokes/pranks, and/or sharing pornographic or sexual images.
- Unwanted touching, kissing, or assault.

To report an incident of sexual harassment or to raise a concern staff should report to their line manager or the headteacher. Reports of sexual harassment will be investigated thoroughly and with the support of the school's HR provider.

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else's complaint. This includes where someone mistakenly believes that the victim has complained, given information, or supported someone else's complaint.

Discrimination by association is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by perception is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that a person has a particular protected characteristic irrespective of whether they do have that protected characteristic, (this does not include marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity).

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity), by third parties such as parents and carers, clients or customers.

Part-time and fixed-term staff should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro rata basis where appropriate) unless different treatment is justified.

## **7.0 Uniform policy**

The same uniform policy applies equally to all pupils, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, the school will consider reasonable requests to alter the uniform; for example, for genuine religious requirements and in making reasonable adjustments for sensory needs. On some

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occasions further advice may need to be sought from support agency partnerships to support a request of this type, e.g. OT Team.

## **8.0 Admissions policy**

Admissions criteria are defined under the school's Admissions Policy and are applied consistently to every young person, irrespective of any protected characteristic.

## **Religious beliefs**

The school respects the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, will comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice wherever possible. An example where a request may be refused is if the religious observance takes place during lesson time, or if it is likely to require the pupil to be unsupervised, however the school will explore other ways to accommodate the request.

## **10.0 Curriculum delivery**

Woodlane has developed a curriculum that:

- ensures that all pupils have appropriate access to all areas of the national curriculum, provided at a suitable level and differentiated according to need.
- provides a broad, balanced and relevant education that takes into account the ethnic background and language needs of all pupils and draws on areas of interest to pupils from different groups.
- is relevant and meaningful to all pupils.
- encourage teaching methods and styles that take account of the needs of pupils from different groups and encourage positive attitudes to ethnic difference, cultural diversity and racial equality.
- utilises the widest possible range of strategies and teaching styles to enable all pupils to have access to an outstanding education.
- addresses the range of SEND presented in the school, both in terms of content and delivery.
- ensures that activities are planned and delivered in such a way that pupils are able to make measurable progress, relative to their existing knowledge and skills and promote a greater understanding of cultural diversity, racial equality and the importance of challenging discrimination.
- ensures that appropriate use is made of the resources available within the local ethnic minority communities.

The curriculum is crucial to tackling inequalities for pupils, including gender stereotyping, preventing bullying, and raising attainment for certain groups. The principles of equality and diversity are embedded in our academic and social curriculum. Positive and proactive steps

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will be taken to prevent discrimination against or victimisation of any pupil in the provision of education or access to any benefit, facility or service, including educational trips, work experience and leisure activities.

The school recognises and promotes awareness of the possibility of bias (for example, gender or racial) and works to eliminate such bias in both teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum to avoid stereotypes and bias.

The school may take positive action to give pupils of a particular racial group, or pupils with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the needs of the pupils in that group; for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.

All pupils are encouraged to work and play freely with and have respect for all other pupils, irrespective of any protected characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the school, and pupils are encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

## **11.0 Exclusion policy**

The decision to suspend or permanently exclude a child is a last resort and will be made in accordance with the Positive Behaviour Policy and Exclusion Policy. Those 2 policies apply to all pupils, and any decision to suspend or exclude will take into account our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## **12.0 Gender identity**

The school is aware of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 towards pupils identifying as transgender and non-binary and will be sensitive to their individual needs, whilst also recognising the needs and sensitivities of other pupils. Pupils who have confirmed that they have commenced the process of transitioning and, therefore, fall under the protected characteristic of gender reassignment will be provided with appropriate pastoral care and support. The school is experienced dealing with issues of this type and has commonly had pupils for whom this applies on roll over the last 15 years.

The school has separate toilet facilities for biological male and female pupils aged 11 years or over, and separate changing rooms for those aged 11 and over. Accessible toilets are available for pupils who require the use of these, (pre-agreed by senior leaders), comprising of a single room for use by one pupil at a time, that can be secured from the inside.

When supporting pupils who are questioning their gender identity the school will:

- Consider its statutory safeguarding duties and the need to promote the welfare of all children.
- Take a cautious approach following requests to support social transition (i.e. change pronouns, names etc. to the gender that differs from the one assigned at birth), with the aim of working alongside parents and seeking clinical input if there is any doubt about what is in the best interests of the child.
- Subject to any safeguarding and data protection considerations, inform parents of any disclosures around gender identity relating to their child, other than in exceptional circumstances, e.g. where staff have reasonable grounds to conclude that doing so would put the child at risk of harm.
- Respect both gender-critical beliefs and gender-affirming beliefs, whilst ensuring that the school remains a respectful place where bullying of any kind is not to be tolerated.
- Follow guidance published by the Department for Education, the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, and advice from any relevant sporting bodies, and comply with all legal duties relating to biological sex.

### **13.0 Applying our policy to recruitment and selection**

We aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics. When recruiting or on promotion, we will aim to take steps to improve the diversity of our workforce and provide equality of opportunity. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant skills and abilities. All applicants for positions will be provided with a copy of our Safer Recruitment Policy, which identifies how we ensure recruitment meets all safeguarding and legal requirements and the Data Policy which set out how we will gather, process and hold personal data of individuals during the recruitment process.

Job selection criteria as set out in the person specification will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job. Short listing of applicants is always done by more than one person and will be carried out objectively against the requirements of the job.

Job advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying.

We will take reasonable steps, where appropriate depending on the situation, to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in our school. This policy will be made available to applicants upon request and can also be found on our website to download.

Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, other than where it is necessary to;

- Establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- Establish if any reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable an applicant to have a fair interview or assessment.
- Carry out equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

Job offers will be conditional upon a satisfactory medical check in accordance with our obligation under Keeping Children Safe in Education, where a school must verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities in accordance with the Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

Applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy or gender identity or history. Applicants will not be asked about matters which may suggest an intention to discriminate on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Applicants will be asked to clarify which pronoun they would prefer to be referred to.

We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance, name, or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original specified documents before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the School's Business Manager

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our school, we monitor diversity data as part of the recruitment process. Provision of this information is voluntary, and it will not adversely affect an individual's success at recruitment, or any other decision related to their employment. The information is removed from applications before short listing and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

#### **14.0 Applying our policy to training, promotion, pay decisions and conditions of service**

All employees will be provided with a copy of our Privacy Notice for Staff which sets out how we will collect, hold, and share personal data of individuals during their employment.

Employees' training needs will be identified through the appraisal process. All employees will be given appropriate access to training for their job, and in order to enable them to progress within the school.

Pay and promotion decisions will be based on an employee's performance (where relevant), skills and experience and as detailed in our pay policy.

Our benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all employees who should have access to them, and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Relevant national and local conditions of service within our school as applied to our employees, will meet the requirements of equal opportunities.

### **15.0 Applying our policy when terminating employment**

We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal, or other disciplinary action.

### **16.0 Applying our policy with pupils.**

For pupils, Woodlane will ensure that:

- we monitor where appropriate, pupil attendance, behaviour, attainment and progress by ethnic group, gender, language, disability etc. to identify and act on areas of underperformance.
- we celebrate and value the achievement and progress of all pupils.
- we offer every pupil the support and guidance they need.
- we train staff to challenge prejudice and stereotyping and promote equality in learning, employment, training and career choice.
- we promote fundamental British Values, including democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty; mutual respect; respect for those with different faiths and beliefs.
- we take steps to ensure pupils on work experience are not subject to prejudice or harassment.

### **17.0 Applying our policy with parents**

For parents, Woodlane will ensure that:

- all parents are regularly informed of their child's progress.
- we view parents/carers as partners and involve them as fully as possible in discussions about their child's learning.
- we provide accessible and meaningful information to parents/carers.
- we provide opportunities for parents to attend Parent Reference Groups, which allow for parents to shape school policies and practices.
- we encourage people from ethnic minority communities to become school governors.
- we develop links with ethnic minority community groups.

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## **18.0 Disability discrimination**

Disability discrimination includes direct or indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate the effects caused by a disability.

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your line manager or a senior leader directly to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. They may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled employees or job applicants at a substantial disadvantage compared to other employees. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for employees who have a disability.

## **19.0 Breaches of this policy**

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against, or you have witnessed discrimination, you are encouraged to raise the matter through our grievance procedure. If you are uncertain which policy applies or need advice on how to proceed you should speak to a senior leader or relevant trade union representative.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

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## **20.0 Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination and harassment**

All incidents of discriminatory treatment, bullying and harassment must be reported to senior staff and recorded as soon as is reasonably possible (and, in any event, within 24 hours of the incident) using CPOMS, (or Staff Safe if relevant).

## **21.0 Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review**

The designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy is the headteacher.

Additional support would also be provided to any parent or significant person wishing to know more about the policy and procedures outlined above. A copy of this policy document is available for inspection during office hours, and an electronic copy is posted on our website.

The effectiveness of this policy will be assessed, and recommendations will be made for changes to the policy and action planning for the future to continue to improve the culture of equality and equity for all within Woodlane High School.

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