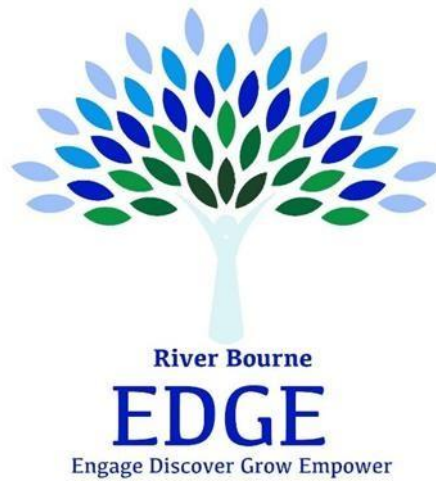




River Bourne Edge Alternative Provision

Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy Owner: Head of Provision
Approved by: Senior Leadership Team
Policy Date: July 2026
Review Date: July 2027

1. Policy Statement

The River Bourne Edge is committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive and respectful environment where every individual is valued and treated with dignity.

We believe that diversity enriches our community and that every student, employee, volunteer, parent, visitor and partner organisation should feel safe, respected and able to participate fully in the life of our provision.

We recognise that many of our students have experienced barriers to education, discrimination, trauma or disadvantage. Our role is to remove barriers wherever possible, promote equality of opportunity and enable every young person to achieve their full potential.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation of any kind will not be tolerated.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are everyone's responsibility and underpin every aspect of life at The River Bourne Edge.

2. Our Inclusive Ethos

At The River Bourne Edge we believe that every individual deserves to feel that they belong.

Our provision is built upon:

- positive relationships;
- restorative practice;
- trauma-informed approaches;
- respect for individuality;
- kindness and compassion;
- fairness and consistency;
- high expectations for everyone.

We celebrate diversity and recognise that every person's experiences, strengths and identity are unique.

Rather than expecting everyone to fit the same model, we aim to understand individual needs and make reasonable adjustments that enable every person to thrive.

We encourage curiosity, empathy and mutual respect so that students develop the confidence to value themselves and others.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- promote equality of opportunity for everyone;
- foster an inclusive culture where diversity is valued;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- ensure compliance with equality legislation;

- remove barriers to participation wherever reasonably possible;
 - promote respect, understanding and belonging;
 - support positive relationships across our community.
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4. Scope

This policy applies to everyone involved with The River Bourne Edge, including:

- students;
- parents and carers;
- employees;
- volunteers;
- governors/directors;
- agency staff;
- contractors;
- visitors;
- partner organisations.

The principles of this policy apply to all aspects of provision, including:

- education;
 - enrichment activities;
 - recruitment;
 - employment;
 - training;
 - admissions;
 - meetings and events;
 - communication;
 - day-to-day interactions.
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5. Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been developed in accordance with current legislation and guidance, including:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Current Edition)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Current Edition)
- Education Act 2002
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) where applicable.

The River Bourne Edge will review this policy whenever significant changes to legislation or statutory guidance occur.

6. Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of the following protected characteristics:

- Age (*employment only*)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (*employment only*)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The River Bourne Edge is committed to ensuring that no individual is treated less favourably because of any protected characteristic.

7. What We Mean by Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Although closely linked, equality, diversity and inclusion each have a distinct meaning.

Equality

Equality means ensuring that everyone has fair access to opportunities, recognising that some individuals may require additional support or reasonable adjustments to achieve equitable outcomes.

Diversity

Diversity recognises and values the differences that make every individual unique.

These differences may include, but are not limited to:

- culture;
 - ethnicity;
 - disability;
 - language;
 - religion;
 - gender;
 - family background;
 - lived experiences;
 - learning needs;
 - personal strengths and interests.
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Inclusion

Inclusion means creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected, listened to and able to participate fully.

At The River Bourne Edge, inclusion means adapting our practice wherever reasonably possible so that every individual feels they belong and can succeed.

8. Promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We promote equality, diversity and inclusion by:

- treating everyone with dignity and respect;
- promoting positive relationships;
- celebrating diversity and individuality;
- challenging discriminatory language or behaviour;
- making reasonable adjustments where required;
- encouraging student voice;
- delivering an inclusive curriculum;
- promoting equality through PSHE and everyday learning;
- supporting staff through training and professional development;
- working collaboratively with families and partner agencies.

Our expectation is that every member of our community actively contributes to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded throughout The River Bourne Edge.

Senior leaders will:

- promote an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued;
 - ensure compliance with equality legislation;
 - monitor equality outcomes across the organisation;
 - provide appropriate training and support for staff;
 - ensure policies and procedures reflect our commitment to equality;
 - respond promptly to incidents of discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
 - review this policy annually.
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All Staff

Every member of staff has a responsibility to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

Staff will:

- treat everyone with dignity and respect;
- model inclusive and respectful behaviour;
- challenge discriminatory language or behaviour;
- promote positive relationships;
- make reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- support students to understand and celebrate diversity;
- report concerns promptly in line with organisational procedures;

- undertake equality and safeguarding training as required.

Staff are expected to demonstrate the values of The River Bourne Edge in all professional interactions.

Students

Students are expected to:

- treat others with kindness and respect;
- celebrate differences;
- use respectful language;
- challenge bullying or discrimination by reporting concerns to staff;
- contribute to a welcoming and inclusive community.

Students are encouraged to express their views respectfully and to recognise that everyone's experiences and perspectives may differ.

Parents, Carers and Partner Organisations

We value positive partnerships with families and professionals.

Parents, carers and partner organisations are encouraged to:

- support our inclusive ethos;
 - work collaboratively with staff;
 - communicate concerns respectfully;
 - promote equality and respect at home and within the wider community.
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10. Supporting Students

Many students attending The River Bourne Edge have experienced barriers to learning, including special educational needs, disability, trauma, disrupted education, mental health difficulties or adverse childhood experiences.

We are committed to removing barriers wherever reasonably possible.

Support may include:

- personalised learning approaches;
- differentiated teaching;
- emotional wellbeing support;
- restorative conversations;
- individual risk assessments;
- sensory or environmental adjustments;
- communication support;
- transition planning;
- collaborative work with families and external professionals.

Our aim is to ensure that every student has equitable access to education and opportunities to achieve success.

11. Reasonable Adjustments

The River Bourne Edge will make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, staff and visitors wherever required under the Equality Act 2010.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- adapting teaching approaches;
- modifying learning resources;
- providing assistive technology;
- adapting the physical environment where practicable;
- adjusting communication methods;
- allowing additional time where appropriate;
- adapting routines or activities to meet individual needs.

Adjustments will always be considered on an individual basis in consultation with the person concerned and, where appropriate, their family and other professionals.

12. Accessibility

The River Bourne Edge is committed to improving accessibility for everyone.

We will continue to develop:

- access to the curriculum;
- access to information;
- access to the physical environment;
- communication with students, families and professionals.

Accessibility arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure that barriers are identified and addressed wherever reasonably practicable.

13. Equality in Employment

The River Bourne Edge is committed to providing equality of opportunity throughout employment.

This includes:

- recruitment;
- selection;
- induction;
- professional development;
- promotion;
- training;
- performance management;

- flexible working where appropriate.

Employment decisions will always be based upon merit, suitability, qualifications and experience.

We are committed to creating a workplace where everyone feels respected, supported and able to contribute fully.

14. Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination

Discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or prejudice-based behaviour will not be tolerated.

This includes behaviour relating to any protected characteristic or any other personal difference.

Examples include:

- discriminatory language;
- offensive jokes;
- exclusion;
- intimidation;
- online abuse;
- hate incidents;
- unwanted conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or degrading environment.

Concerns will be addressed promptly using restorative approaches where appropriate, alongside the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Where behaviour constitutes a safeguarding concern or criminal offence, appropriate agencies will be involved.

15. Monitoring and Equality Objectives

The River Bourne Edge is committed to continually improving equality, diversity and inclusion.

Senior leaders will monitor information where appropriate to identify any patterns or barriers relating to:

- attendance;
- behaviour;
- exclusions;
- achievement and progress;
- recruitment;
- complaints;
- safeguarding concerns.

This information will be used to identify areas for improvement and to ensure that no group is unfairly disadvantaged.

The River Bourne Edge's equality objectives are to:

- promote an inclusive culture where everyone feels they belong;
 - remove barriers to participation and achievement;
 - celebrate diversity across the organisation;
 - improve outcomes for vulnerable learners;
 - ensure equality is embedded in all aspects of provision.
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16. Equality Impact

When developing or reviewing policies, procedures or significant organisational changes, The River Bourne Edge will consider their potential impact on equality and inclusion.

Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that individuals or groups are not placed at an unfair disadvantage.

17. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Attendance Policy
 - SEND Policy
 - Staff Code of Conduct
 - Safer Recruitment Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Complaints Policy
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18. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- annually;
- following changes to legislation or statutory guidance;
- following significant organisational changes;
- where monitoring identifies a need for improvement.

The review will be undertaken by the Head of Provision in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team.

19. Policy Summary

At The River Bourne Edge, equality, diversity and inclusion are fundamental to who we are.

We believe that everyone should be treated with dignity, fairness and respect, and that differences should be recognised as strengths rather than barriers.

Through restorative practice, positive relationships and trauma-informed approaches, we seek to create a community where every individual feels safe, valued and able to thrive.

Our commitment is not simply to comply with legislation, but to build a culture where inclusion is lived every day through our actions, our relationships and our expectations.