

Reviewed: January 2025

Equalities and Diversity Policy

Introductory notes

After the Equality Act 2010 was introduced fully in April 2011 there was longer a requirement that schools should draw up and publish equality schemes or policies. It is still good equalities practice for a school to make a statement about the principles that underpin equality diversity and inclusion in school.

Northumberland PRU's principles reflect our ethos and values. They, together with our equality Information and objectives, reflect wider school development priorities. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity where everyone connected to the school feels proud of their identity.

Legal framework

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), sex, disability, race, gender reassignment, religion and belief and sexual orientation.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion and more recent directives to teach about character and values through SMSC in the curriculum.
3. We recognise these duties are essential, and that they reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Guiding principles

4. In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled or have mental health challenges
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender or sex
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation, belief or faith background
- whatever their sexual orientation

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made, and emotional wellbeing promoted
- Ethnicity and race, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- sex, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, non-binary people, women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background, or having no religious beliefs
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people.
- emotional resilience and wellbeing
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic, lesbophobic, biphobic and transphobic language or discrimination
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Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled or face mental health challenges
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious belief or non-belief, national origin or immigration status
- whatever their sex, gender reassignment status and sexual orientation, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people

- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- children from disadvantaged backgrounds

Principle 6: We aim to consult and involve widely - people affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from the ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds that make up our community
- women and men, and girls and boys
- people of different sexual orientations

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit.

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- people of all sexual orientations
- gender diverse people with the characteristic of gender reassignment

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence.

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity
- sex

Principle 9: Data.

Each year we formulate and publish data we have collected in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity
- disadvantage
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5. We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this will have an impact if we set ourselves challenging and measurable objectives to demonstrate this commitment.

The Curriculum

6. We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out in paragraph 4 above.

Through the curriculum we aim to:

- Respect, embrace and value differences between people.
- Prepare pupils for life in a diverse society.
- Make the school a place where everyone feels welcomed and valued
- Ensure that an inclusive ethos is maintained
- Acknowledge the existence of racism and religious hostility and take steps to prevent them
- Support our young people to express and deal with their emotions and difficulties
- Help pupils to explore and understand one-another's lifestyles and beliefs as well as exploring shared values

Ethos and organization

7. We ensure the principles listed in paragraph 4 above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- Behaviour, sanctions and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community
- safeguarding children in education
- promoting emotional health and wellbeing

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

8. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum.
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia, lesbophobia, biphobia and transphobia
- prejudice which may be the precursor to radicalisation and extremism

11. There is clear guidance for teachers defining how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. All staff, teaching and support, should view dealing with and resolving identity-based incidents as vital to the wellbeing of the school.

12. We take seriously the expectation that we will record prejudice-related incidents at our school and detail how they are managed.

Roles and responsibilities

13. The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

14. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

15. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

16. All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

Information and resources

18. We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

19. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources and training which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

20. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff development and training

21. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the policy

22. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

Monitoring and evaluation

23. We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

Northumberland PRU Equalities & Diversity Action Plan 2025 - 2029

Progress through the action plan will be monitored by the Leadership team and Management Committee alongside the School Development Plan. The policy will be reviewed at least every three years. Updating will take account of changes in the law, government policy, Local Authority and school priorities.

Policy will be reviewed annually.

Approved by the Headteacher, Mr R Carr	Date: 8th January 2025
Approved by the Management Committee	Date: Pending
Last Reviewed On:	Date: 8th January 2025
Next Review Due By:	Date: January 2026

Appendix 1: Requirements by law EQUALITIES LEGISLATION

To comply with equalities law, schools have the following General Duties:

RACE Race Relations (Amendment) Act: Race Equality Duty	DISABILITY Disability Discrimination Acts 1995, 2005: Disability Equality Duty	GENDER Equality Act 2006: Gender Equality Duty
The race equality duty is to:	The disability equality duty is to:	The gender equality duty is to:
1. Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination	1. Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others	1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
2. Promote equality of opportunity	2. Eliminate unlawful disability discrimination	2. Promote equality of opportunity between men and women, including boys and girls
3. Promote good relations between people of different racial groups	3. Eliminate disability-related harassment	
	4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people	
	5. Encourage participation by disabled people in public life	
	6. Take steps to take account of peoples' disabilities, even if this requires more favourable treatment	

To help meet the general duties there are specific duties to:

4. Have a written RACE EQUALITY POLICY by 2002	7. Prepare and publish a DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME by Dec 2006/Dec 2007	3. Publish a GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME by April 2007
5. Monitor and assess the impact of policy, particularly on pupils' attainment/achievement, and take reasonable steps to publish annually the	8. Involve disabled people in the development of the scheme	4. Include if relevant an objective to address the cause of any gender pay gap
	8a. Include Accessibility Plan	

results of this assessment

6. Record, report and respond to racist incidents

9. Set out in the scheme:

- a) How disabled people have been involved in its preparation
- b) Their arrangements for gathering information on the effect of the school's policies on disabled people
- c) The recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees
- d) The educational opportunities available to and the achievements of disabled pupils
- e) The school's methods for assessing the impact of its current or proposed policies and practices on disability equality
- f) The steps the school is going to take to meet the general duty (action plan)
- g) The arrangements for using information to support the review of the action plan and to inform subsequent schemes

10. Implement the scheme within 3 years

11. Report on the scheme annually

12. Revise and review the scheme every 3 years

5. As part of the scheme:

- a) Consult stakeholders
- b) Gather and use information on how the school's policy and practices affect gender equality in the workforce
- c) Assess the impact of current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality
- d) Implement the scheme within 3 years
- e) Report on progress annually
- f) Revise and review the plan every 3 years

Recommended further guidance:

The duty to promote race equality, A Guide for Schools, Commission for Racial Equality May 2002 www.cre.gov.uk

Recommended further guidance:

'Promoting Disability Equality in Schools', DCSF available on www.teachernet.gov.uk

Recommended further guidance:

The Gender Equality Duty and Schools, Equal Opportunities Commission March 2007 www.eoc.org.uk/genderduty

This new legislation makes it unlawful to discriminate against people, other than in the most exceptional cases, on the grounds of

sexual orientation, religion/belief or age. Victimisation of a person is also unlawful.

Discrimination is unlawful in relation to education, employment and training, the provision of goods, facilities and services to members of the public.

Governing bodies need to ensure that policies and practices in their school take full account of these legal requirements to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion/belief and age.

Recommended further guidance: www.teachernet.gov.uk/equalities

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

RELIGION/BELIEF

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

AGE

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

OFSTED inspectors will ensure that schools are compliant with legislation as well as evaluating the impact of their actions. It is acceptable to produce a Single Equality Plan covering all of the requirements set out above. There is no requirement to repeat any of the content of this equality plan in the broader school plan, though it may be helpful to cross-refer to make clear how equality is embedded in all of the school's policies and practices.

Evaluations of the school's work in promoting equality and combating discrimination relate directly to the judgement on *how well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can* and also relate to other inspection judgements.

Evidence will be drawn from:

- Discussion with senior staff about attainment data and the relative performance of different groups of learners, including specific evidence that the school is monitoring this data and discussing its strategies to tackle any underachievement with the governing body and stakeholders
- Discussion with senior staff about how the school is promoting its relationships with parents and learners in 'hard to reach' communities
- Discussion with pupils about the effectiveness of the school's strategy to promote equality including its initiatives to combat bullying
- Analysis of the rate of exclusions for pupils from different groups
- Direct observation of learners in lessons and around the school to evaluate the impact of the school's strategies on pupils' outcomes, such as their language and literacy skills, social and cultural development and the ability of learners from different backgrounds to work together.

Source: *Inspection Matters Issue 15, Ofsted*

Appendix 2: Legislative context

1970	Equal Pay Act
1975	Sex Discrimination Act
1976	Race Relations Act
1986	Sex Discrimination (Amendment) Act
1988	Education Reform Act
1989	Children Act
1995	Disability Discrimination Act
1996	Education (Consolidation) Act
1998	The Human Rights Act
1999	Macpherson Report Action Plan
1999	Voluntary Code of Practice to Combat Age Discrimination
1999	Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations
1999 – 2004/5	Social Inclusion Duty
2000	Race Relations (Amendment) Act
2000	National Curriculum (revised), inclusion statement
2001	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act
2001	Special Needs Code of Practice
2002	Statutory Code of Practice on Duty to Promote Race Equality
2003	Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations
2003	Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations
2004	Children Act: Every Child Matters
2004	Gender Recognition Act
2004	Civil Partnership Act
2005	Disability Discrimination Act
2006	Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Disability Equality
2006	Gender Equality Duty Statutory Code of Practice
2006	Education and Inspections Act (Community Cohesion Duty)
2006	Equality Act
2006	Work and Families Act
2006	Employment Equality (Age) Regulations
2007	Gender Equality Duty
2007	The Children's Plan: building brighter futures

Appendix 3: Accessibility Plan

The school's Accessibility Plan has been extended and strengthened to meet the requirements of a Disability Equality Scheme in line with LA guidelines, to include:

- as well as pupils it includes disabled staff, parents, carers and others
- the involvement of a disabled person is a requirement
- the gathering of information is a requirement

The Management Committee are required to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils in 3 ways, using the Accessibility Plan:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum (including extra-curricular activities)
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled

The plan has to be resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised and reported on annually, and contributes to three key duties:

1. not to treat disabled pupils less favourable for a reason related to their disability
2. to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
3. to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils

Recommended further guidance: 'Accessible schools: planning to increase access to schools for disabled people', DCSF LEA/0168/2002

Appendix 4: Further information

- *Legislation on Equality and Diversity, DCSF May 2007 (from www.teachernet.gov.uk)*
- *Schools' Race Equality Policies, from issues to outcomes DFES-1124-2004*
- *The duty to promote race equality, A Guide for Schools www.cre.gov.uk*
- *QCA Respect for all audit tool 2006, www.qca.org.uk/inclusion/*
- *Ofsted Race Equality in Education, HMI 589 Nov 2005*
- *The Gender Equality Duty and Schools EOC March 2007*
- *Northumberland County Council's Equality and Diversity policies, www.northumberland.gov.uk*
- *Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC, formerly CRE) www.equalityhumanrights.com*
- *Information about the Disability Equality Duty from www.dotheduty.org*
- *Examples of good practice in schools from www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk*

Appendix 5: Glossary

Equality is:

- about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and have the opportunity to fulfil their potential – creating a level playing field
- about removing or reducing all forms of unfair discrimination and has been underpinned by legislation
- about breaking down barriers for people in particular groups such as black and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, gay men/ lesbians/bisexuals/ transgender people, younger and older people, people from different religious & faith backgrounds, and men and women

NCC Equality and Diversity Policy 2005

Diversity is:

- about including everyone
- valuing differences
- harnessing differences in individuals to the benefit of both the organisation and the individual, by allowing people with different perspectives and views to use their unique blend of skills and character to improve the quality and performance of the organisation
- having a better understanding of the diverse needs of our community

NCC Equality and Diversity Policy 2005

Duty

A mandatory and legal obligation to do something

Promote

Contribute to the progress and growth of....

Make publicity for.....

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

Bringing together the Equal Opportunities Commission, Disability Rights Commission and Commission for Race Equality, also serving as a national body for age, religion and belief and sexual discrimination as well as human rights.

Direct discrimination

When a person is *intentionally* treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances because of a special characteristic such as sex, race or disability.

Direct discrimination is unlawful.

Indirect discrimination

When a provision or practice is applied equally to all but *unintentionally* has a different impact on people so that a person or group are at a disadvantage as a result.

Indirect discrimination is unlawful.

Victimisation

When a person is treated less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination eg making a complaint.

Victimisation is unlawful.

Harassment

When a person's dignity is violated or behaviour creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on the grounds of a relevant equalities characteristic eg sex, race.
Harassment is unlawful.

Disabled person

Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
(*DDA 2005*)

Gender

Two aspects: gender identity is a person's internal perception and experience of their gender; gender role is the way that the person lives in society and interacts with others based on their gender identity