



# **WHICKHAM SCHOOL**

## **Equality Objectives Policy**

## Contents

Section	Page
Policy review	1
Aims	1
Legislation and guidance	2
Roles and responsibilities	2
Eliminating discrimination	3
Advance equality of opportunity	4
Fostering good relations	4
Equality considerations in decision making	5
Equality objectives	5
Monitoring arrangements	8

## Policy Review

Last reviewed	By whom	Next review
August 2022	P Wheatley	July 2023 (monitoring/updates) July 2026 (full review)
August 2023	P Wheatley	July 2024 (monitoring/updates) July 2026 (full review)
July 2024	P Wheatley	July 2025 (monitoring/updates) July 2026 (full review)

## 1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that all aspects of school life, including admissions, curriculum and staffing are dealt with in a fair and just manner.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives
- This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).
- This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Headteacher
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training and understand the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The Headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

The HR & Governance manager will:

- Support the Headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Support the Headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

#### **4. Eliminating discrimination**

- The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.
- Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.
- Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act – for example, during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting, it is recorded in the meeting minutes.
- New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every year
- The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

#### **5. Advancing equality of opportunity**

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. supporting Muslims during Ramadan)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

## **6. Fostering good relations**

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHCE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

## **7. Equality considerations in decision-making**

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays

- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for all pupils

The school keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

## 8. Equality objectives

Our equality objectives for 2022-2026 are as follows:

Objective 1:	Equality in admissions
Why we have chosen this objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure no discrimination occurs in pupil admissions</li> </ul>
To achieve this objective we plan to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To continue to retain Gateshead LA to run the school's admissions process on our behalf as part of the LA's coordinated admissions process. The LA consults and amends policies to comply with best practice.</li> <li>• To work with the SEND panel to ensure we can meet the needs of Y6 pupils with SEND on entry to Year 7.</li> </ul>
Update on progress:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Met &amp; ongoing</li> <li>• Increasing number of applications from LAC/SEND pupils is an indicator of the perceived inclusivity of the school.</li> </ul>

Objective 2:	Equality in curriculum access and pupil experience
Why we have chosen this objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality in access to our curriculum and ensuring pupils feel valued are fundamental to school life</li> </ul>
To achieve this objective we plan to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review SoL to ensure equality issues are explicitly addressed</li> <li>• Celebrate diversity through an annual diversity week, and more regularly through pupil leadership and participation in our rainbow society</li> </ul>
Update on progress:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to curriculum delivery and not content. Nevertheless we strive to make our curriculum content inclusive and positive about diversity. We hold an annual diversity week and have recently reviewed our curriculum to ensure that it is broadly representative (for example following the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020).</li> <li>• Equality is a key theme of our citizenship programme. We run a</li> </ul>

	<p>Rainbow Society in school, becoming recognised as a model of good practice across the region promoting both pupil and staff diversity. Strong evidence includes pupils who have transferred into our school via the fair access panel from other schools because they recognise Whickham School's commitment to diversity and inclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● PSHCE programme has been reviewed to ensure all protected characteristics are explicitly taught</li> <li>● We employ an Achievement Team to help identify and resolve any visible or hidden barriers to learning. This includes support to remove temporary barriers.</li> <li>● The school takes all concerns about discrimination and harassment seriously. Incidents are closely monitored (termly) by governors. As a school we seek to embed restorative practice and principles. Over time this has resulted in fewer issues arising. This has helped to foster good relations across all characteristics and between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</li> <li>● Within assessment we work hard with our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) team to ensure all pupils have equal opportunity to perform to the best of their ability in their examinations. Our exam access arrangements have expanded significantly in the past 5 years.</li> <li>● Our Rainbow society is working to expand the range of events that are celebrated including a refugee week as well as racism, black history month and a number of other ideas.</li> <li>● Where necessary we adapt the locations of our teaching to meet access needs.</li> <li>● Site updates over the summer of 2024 have increased the accessibility of the wider site to a wider range of pupils.</li> </ul>
--	--

Objective 3:	Equality in personnel decisions
Why we have chosen this objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensuring equality in personnel matters will help to ensure we retain a strong and motivated workforce</li> </ul>
To achieve this objective we plan to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use EO data post recruitment to monitor recruitment for hidden biases</li> <li>● Ensure our commitment to equality is clear in job advertisements</li> <li>● Review flexible working questions positively</li> <li>● Consult staff regularly on dietary requirements prior to inset days / evening events</li> </ul>
Update on progress:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The school has a larger than average number of part-time staff (30%, NA: 17%)</li> <li>● The school is increasingly open to trialling part-time leadership</li> </ul>

	<p>roles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inclusivity is mentioned in our adverts and increasingly mentioned by candidates during interviews</li> <li>● Dietary requirements are regularly consulted upon</li> </ul>
--	---

<b>Objective 4:</b>	<b>Equality for SEND pupils</b>
Why we have chosen this objective:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Historical SEND provision has been variable</li> </ul>
To achieve this objective we plan to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Restructure and train our SEND team to focus on the 4 key strands of SEND</li> <li>● Minimise pupil withdrawal from the curriculum and move away from practices which include withdrawal from a whole subject</li> <li>● Provide CPDL to school staff, formalising the role of the TA and ensuring written agreements are in place to maximise their value and avoid “learned helplessness”</li> <li>● Improve the SEND referral process</li> <li>● Refocus SEND intervention on numeracy, literacy, communication and SEMH.</li> <li>● Improve our physical and sensory related SEND support</li> <li>● Introduce person-centred planning and TA understanding of MITA processes</li> </ul>
Update on progress:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SEND Team has been restructured</li> <li>● TA/Teacher agreements were put in place in 21/22 and continue to be further embedded.</li> <li>● SEND is a core part of our CPDL programme</li> <li>● Sensory and SEMH rooms provided</li> <li>● Parental demand is driving an increase in our EHCP and ARMS provisions. Ensuring we continue to deliver our improved offer to a larger cohort will be a focus in 24/25.</li> <li>● The DfE have decided to rebuild the remainder of Whickham School. Securing a fit for purpose SEND unit and ARMS within this will be a key objective.</li> <li>● SEND is a key part of our 24/25 school improvement plan. We will be improving our person centred plans (PCPs).</li> </ul>

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

- The school will update annually the equality information we publish on the website
- This document will be reviewed by the resources sub-committee at least every 4 years.
- Staff and pupils will be asked to meet to discuss the equality objectives and progress towards them at least every 4 years.