



Uplands Primary School

Equality Policy and Objectives

Date agreed: October 2022

Date for review: October 2026 (with progress review each year)

Introduction

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers. We strive to enable all pupils to, 'be the best they can be' and our core values of respect, kindness, resilience and creativity underpin school life.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture.

For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Employment Equality Policy and other key policies. Key policies can be found on our website.

National and Legal Context

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, gender reassignment, race, sex, maternity and pregnancy, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership (applicable only to staff).

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

School Context

As a school the majority of our families are White British. A typical pupil is enthusiastic, ready to learn and accepting of difference.

Our percentage of pupils who are SEN, disadvantaged or have English as an additional language is below the national average. We have families who practise different faiths such as Christianity, Jehovah's Witness and Islam. We have seen a small increase in the number of practising Muslims joining our school over the past few years.

We have noted that the majority of our pupils on the SEN register are boys and we have noticed an increase in the number of pupils entering the school requiring or already having an EHC plan. Over the past few years we have focussed on ensuring that girls achieve as well as boys in Maths. Recently, we have seen a small increase in the number of pupils from a service background.

Principles

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value

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

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their sex
- Whatever their gender identity
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or pupils may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

- Disability – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made.
- Sex – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs.
- Gender reassignment – we recognise an individual has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.
- Religion and belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with.
- Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds.
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers.
- Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference.
- Marriage and civil partnership – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have.
- Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth.

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

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes and interaction between groups and communities different from each other
- an absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

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

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including pupils who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting pupils, we will take account of views expressed at school council meetings, through discussions in class and through pupil conferencing; for parents, through parent governor representation, meetings and surveys, and for staff, through staff governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum offer foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Our current equality information can be found on our website under the 'Key Information' section.

As we have less than 150 staff, we are not required to publish information in relation to our staff, and therefore are only required to publish pupil-related data.

9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7).

The objectives can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement and take into account both national, county and school level priorities.

We will set ourselves new objectives every four years, but keep them under review and report to the Governing body annually on progress towards achieving them.

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- The delivery of the school curriculum especially our PDL units of work
- The teaching and learning within the school
- Our practice in relation to pupil progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to pupils, their families and staff
- Our policies and practice in relation to pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers
- Our contact with the wider school community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and pupils are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

We recognise that some groups of pupils are more vulnerable to abuse and we have clear safeguarding procedures in school that we follow to ensure that all our pupils feel safe in school.

Roles and responsibilities

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 and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver the curriculum and lessons

- support pupils in their class who have additional needs

Qualitative information

The school has published various policies on the school's internet site. These policies evidence the school's commitment to the principles outlined in this policy and the public sector equality duty. For further information, you are welcome to come into school and speak with the Inclusion Leader and/or the Headteacher.

Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint regarding the implementation of this policy, then we suggest that an appointment is made to speak to the Inclusion Leader and/or the Headteacher in the first instance. If you still remain dissatisfied, then we have a further complaints policy which can be found on our website.

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- *eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act*
- *advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not*
- *foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not*

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief and sexual orientation).

We have also involved members of the school community in the following ways:

- parent survey
- pupil conferencing
- contact with parents representing pupils with particular protected characteristics
- analysis of data such as representation at clubs, on the school council and number of awards given out.
- Analysis of data such as phonics, end of KS1 data and end of KS2 data.

Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objectives:

Objective 1: To ensure that pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are able to participate fully in all aspects of school life.

Rationale: Although SEN pupils are well supported in class, our analysis shows that SEN pupils do not put themselves forward for roles such as Team Captain and that our processes may act as a barrier for them. In addition to this, we have noted that SEN pupils are under-represented in the School Council (no SEN last year), as well as after school and lunchtime clubs. Our processes for joining these events may be a barrier. Citizenship activities such as running a stall for the Citizenship Fayre was stressful for some SEN pupils last year and we need to support pupils to be able to engage in these activities.

Actions we would like to take:

- Reduce some of the barriers that SEN pupils face when applying for some of the roles across the school. For example, at the moment, to become a Team Captain, pupils have to write a speech. A dyslexic child stated, '*This would take me a long time and I still might not get chosen*'.
- Provide more accessible ways for SEN pupils to engage in key roles and increased their confidence.
- Discuss with pupils what they would like to be involved in and offer support so they can access/develop their interests.
- Ensure SEN pupils understand the range of clubs and events open to them and that they have a voice within the school.
- Work with parents to reduce some of the barriers that prevent SEN pupils from staying to after school clubs.

Objective 2: To embed consistent procedures in the school so that pupils from different religions are fully supported in school.

Rationale: We have noticed that staff need some training on the key religious beliefs and practises within our community. This was also mentioned by parents to the Headteacher and raised on our parent survey. Whilst we are willing to do our best to support our pupils, often we are reacting to requests and conversations with parents. We would like to work towards getting to a point where all staff can pre-empt support for our pupils and consequently we have a more consistent approach. For example, staff understand dietary requirements for our Muslim pupils.

Actions we would like to take:

- Ensure that all staff are trained on the key principles, practises and beliefs in Christianity, Islam and for Jehovah's Witnesses.
- Ensure that the school works with pupils to support them to practise their religion comfortably within the school day.
- Ensure that all staff understand the key systems we have in school to support pupils.

- Work with parents to ensure that they feel supported and included, listening to feedback where needed.
- Utilise areas around the school more effectively so that pupils feel comfortable and supported.
- Ensure careful timetabling and communication to parents regarding key events so that adjustments can be made to support and include pupils.

In addition to the objectives above, we have identified that as a school we need to re-fresh training regarding equalities and aim to ensure this happens by the end of the academic year 2022-23.