**Hexham First School**

**Equality Information and Objectives October 2024 - July 2028**

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**Aims**

Hexham First School aims to meet its equality obligations by having due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

3. Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not

 **Legislation identifies 9 protected characteristics:**

1. age

2. disability

3. gender reassignment

4. marriage and civil partnership

5. pregnancy and maternity

6. race

7. religion or belief

8. Sex

9. sexual orientation

**Legislation and guidance**

Since the Equality Act 2010 came into effect in April 2011 there has no longer been a requirement that schools should draw up and publish equality schemes or policies. It is still good practice, however, for a school to make a statement about the principles according to which it reviews the impact on equalities of its policies and practices, and according to which it gathers and publishes information, and decides on specific objectives.

The following principles underpin our work in school. Hexham First School aims to meet its equality obligations by having due regard to the need to:

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

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools Education and Inspections Act 2006

**Guiding principles**

 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

• whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status

• whatever their gender and gender identity

• whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation 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 in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

• disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made

• ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised

• gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men,

are recognised

• religion, belief or faith background, or having no religious beliefs

• sexual identity

• gender identity.

**Principle 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 towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and nondisabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people

• 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, and 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, biphobic and transphobic language or discrimination.

**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

• whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status

• whatever their gender and sexual identity, 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: 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 variant people.

**Principle 7: We base our practices on sound evidence**

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

**Roles and responsibilities**

The school will**:**

* Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published on both school website
* They will be communicated to staff, pupils and parents/carers
* They will be reviewed and updated at least every three years

School governors will:

* Familiarise themselves with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document and identify any training needs

The Headteacher will:

* Ensure that the importance of equality and diversity is given a high profile and regularly reinforced to staff and pupils
* Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
* Track and review the extent to which the school is successful in meeting the objectives
* Include an updated section on termly Headteacher Report

**Eliminating discrimination**

 The school has clear obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that school-based provision complies with the legislation and is non-discriminatory. To ensure that the importance of equality is given a high level of importance we will take regular and appropriate opportunities to reinforce this including:

**1. Policies and procedures**

1.1. Where relevant, these will highlight the need to ensure equality and avoid any potential discrimination

**2. Headteacher Reports (termly)**

 2.1. There will be a discrete section for feedback on how the school is meeting its equality objectives

**3. Staff induction and training**

3.1. All staff including members will receive training on equality and diversity during their induction programme

3.2. All staff members will receive face-to-face training every 3 years

**4. Meetings**

4.1. Stakeholders will be mindful of their legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 during meetings, seeking further advice and guidance where required

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to above.

● 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, biphobia and transphobia

● prejudice which may be the precursor to radicalisation and extremism

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. We take seriously the expectation that we will report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of race-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

**Advancing equality of opportunity**

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

* Minimising or eliminating disadvantages suffered by people, which are connected to a particular characteristic they have, e.g. transgender individuals or those with disabilities
* Taking appropriate and reasonable steps to meet the needs of people who have a particular characteristic, e.g. enabling students with disabilities full access to the curriculum
* Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities, e.g. ensuring school activities are accessible to all pupils

**Fostering good relations**

Hexham First School aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share through:

**The curriculum**

Promoting understanding, tolerance and respect of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum, primarily through RE and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education as well as our No Outsiders curriculum.

Other curriculum areas such as English, geography, history and French will afford opportunities for our students to become more knowledgeable about other cultures and ways of life

**Assemblies and/or Collective Worship**

Our assembly programme in school will ensure that equality issues are addressed in a thoughtful and considered manner

Where appropriate, external speakers will be invited to support provision

**School visits**

Organising school trips and activities based in and around the local community

**Potential pupil conflict**

Dealing promptly and effectively with any tensions between different groups of pupils linked to protected characteristics.

**Pupil engagement**

We will encourage all pupils to engage with activities on offer such as music and sports clubs

We will identify any barriers to participation based on protected characteristics and work to eliminate these

**Equality considerations in decision-making**

Hexham First School commits to paying due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made and will consider the potential impact of these decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, we will consider whether the trip:

* Is accessible to all students including those with disabilities
* Caters for both boys and girls including access to appropriate and equivalent facilities

**Published equality information about the context of our school (2024 - 25)**

Published objectives 2024-2026 This is our published information about our school and the ways in which we work to eliminate differences of outcome for groups with protected characteristics. It includes information about the work we do to promote equality and challenge discrimination.

We are a small first school with less than 100 children on roll located in the east end of Hexham, This number fluctuates with 3 nursery intakes over an academic year.We teach children about their rights and the school’s values, known as the Hexham Way - these include: Respect, kindness, confidence, resilience, ambition, curiosity and uniqueness.. Our school promotes and teaches the children to understand British values.

A very small number of our pupils currently speak English as an Additional Language (2024– 25 2%). This is below the national average (state primary school national average 21.2%). The school has no BAME pupils in school compared to the national average of 33.1% of children in state funded primary schools.

The school has data on its composition broken down by types of disability and special educational need. Our school has clear protocols and targeted provision to support these pupils who require additional learning or emotional support.

The SEND policy is accessible from the school website and is available in a printed format on request. Some pupils join the school with communication and language delays. We address this through individualised support, including drawing on the support of speech and language therapists.

The Local Authority Safeguarding team provide challenge and support in maintaining the highest safeguarding standards. The school is an accessible building on one level with an accessible toilet and wheelchair accessible routes.

We record and report instances of discriminatory language or bullying, and we tackle these in accordance with the County Council’s guidance for dealing with discriminatory incidents and hate crime in schools. We can report racist incidents using the [online form](https://docs.google.com/a/northumberland.gov.uk/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfJ8ThGYi0wZognMkW_LYSUYjEfMBByC3ln4FR2H1qF63J-6w/viewform?c=0&w=1).

All staff and governors completed required Prevent training every two years and recognise the relationship between hate crime and radicalisation or extremism. We are conscious of the vulnerability of people in our region to messages about far-right extremism, and welcome open discussion and debate with the children in order to dispel myths and misconceptions.

We recognise that most pupils may have limited opportunities to experience the wider UK and urban contexts outside Northumberland and prioritise a programme of deep learning, role models and visitors to broaden understanding of the plural, multicultural, multi-faith context of modern Britain. The school calendar of events makes use of the opportunities there are to develop wider cultural awareness and social capital. The school records data about religion and belief when it is provided by parents or carers through our data collection mechanism. This enables us to state with confidence that we are inclusive and sensitive with regard to pupils’ religions and beliefs

**Documentation and record-keeping**

Our school has a statement of overarching equality policy (as part of this document). The school aims to extend children’s understanding of fostering good relations and challenging discrimination in a practical context through the work we do on promoting friendship, dealing with feelings and feeling safe to share concerns with adults. The ethos of the school supports and underpins our commitment to the values of democracy, tolerance and mutual respect. When developing policies, we carry out an Equality Impact Assessment.

**Responsibilities**

All members of staff have responsibility for equalities and for meeting equality objectives. All staff take responsibility for anti-bullying good practice.

**Staffing**

There is good equal opportunities practise in the recruitment and promotion of staff.

**Behaviour and safety**

There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related incidents. The school annually receives a report on the number of racist incidents sent to the Local Authority, which governors approve in the autumn term.

When appropriate, we can engage with Northumbria Police’s Community Engagement Team to demonstrate our integrity in supporting those with protected characteristics from vulnerability to hate crime and extremism.

School council members are advocates for their peers, and we know from our meetings that the majority of pupils feel safe from all kinds of bullying. The school’s behaviour policy is available to download from the website and a paper copy can be requested.

**Curriculum**

There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion, mutual understanding and being a responsible global citizen. The school ensures that children learn in an age-appropriate way to value and access their rights and those of other children. There are activities across the curriculum, including PSHE Kapow scheme of work and assemblies to promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to help them to experience values and develop the concept of global citizenship.

**Published Equality Objectives**

**Objective 1: Eliminating Discrimination**

In order to be a ‘welcoming and inclusive school’ in line with our school values ensure that all staff understand the equality objectives and embed them throughout the curriculum through the new Kapow PSHE curriculum. The values are in weekly assemblies and curriculum leaders are embedding them in their long-term planning. Whole class PSHE floor books are used to record conversations relating to equality and revisited throughout the year to ensure children remember. We follow the No Outsiders programme to help foster a respectful and safe environment.

**Objective 2: Advancing Equality**

To ensure that the curriculum celebrates the diversity in our community and that all children are represented. For men and women are both represented in the history curriculum and the reading spine ensures children from all cultures and backgrounds are represented so that all children see themselves in the books they read.

**Objective 3: Foster Good Relations**

Hexham First School is close to a number of care homes and sheltered housing schemes. Many of the children do not have a relationship with older people, and we recognised that an intergenerational project would create opportunities for reflective communication, a deeper connection to the local community, would build understanding of the issues of ageing as well as the valuable resource and life experiences of older people.

**SMART**

**Specific: Some of the specific strategies and interventions being offered include:**

All children are able to take part in intergenerational projects with residents in care homes. These include singing, dancing and sharing of Christmas cards

**Measurable:**

Pupils articulate empathy and understanding about the lives of older people. Some of the consequences of ageing are better understood, and at times children do learn about end of life situations and even death. The protected characteristic of age is understood in context, and children better understand and can articulate some of the issues that affect an ageing population. By January 2026, every pupil will have visited a local care home on at least two occasions per year, including the making and sending of Christmas cards.

**Attainable:**

The objective is considered attainable due an appropriate time-scale and previous relationships with the care homes. The project is an investment in our local community, and it brings social capital and mutual benefit to children and residents alike

**Relevant:**

This objective is relevant to our geographical setting, and benefits children who participate as they all have the same opportunities to interact with an older person, regardless of their family circumstances.

**Time Bound:** In January 2028, we will review and report on the success of the initiative and evaluate the extent to which we have fostered good relations in our community and beyond.

**Monitoring arrangements**

The Headteacher will update the equality information we publish annually. This document will be reviewed by the Headteacher and the Governing Body at least every 4 years. This document will be approved by the Headteacher and the Governing Body

**Links with other policies**

This document links to the following policies:

* Accessibility policy and plan
* Risk assessment
* Behaviour policy

**Designated Members of Staff**

Justine Overton: Headteacher

Jenna Moore PSHE lead