

CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Equal Opportunities Policy

REVIEW DATE: November 2025
(Sooner if legislation dictates)

This policy is in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, giving due regard to groups with 'protected characteristics', in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership, in accordance with the Act.

Aims

Equality of opportunity at Castle Primary School is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

We aim to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across all aspects of school life. We do this by:

- Creating an ethos in which pupils and staff feel valued and secure;
- Building self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, so they can use these qualities to achieve their full potential and become rounded citizens of the wider community;
- Having consistent expectations of the pupils and their learning;
- Removing or minimising barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve;
- Ensuring that our teaching takes into account the learning needs of all pupils through our curriculum and lesson planning;
- Actively tackling discrimination and promoting equality through our curriculum;
- Making clear to our pupils what constitutes aggressive and discriminatory behaviour;
- Ensuring class and school resources reflect society as a whole;
- Having clear procedures for dealing with discriminatory incidents and that these are understood by all; and
- Ensuring all pupils develop mutual respect through the school ethos, teachings and adult example.

These aims are designed to ensure that the school meets the needs of all of its community, taking account of the nine protected characteristics; race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and gender reassignment. It is important that in this school we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

Our Schools Commitment to Equality for all is by:

- Ensuring that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their full potential;
- Respecting and valuing differences between people;
- Preparing pupils for life in a diverse society;
- Acknowledging the existence of discrimination and taking steps to prevent it
- Making the school a place where everyone, irrespective of a protected characteristic, feels welcomed and valued;
- Promoting good relations between groups within the school and the wider community;
- Ensuring that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained;
- Opposing all forms of discrimination and harassment;
- Being proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Our School Equality Ethos

The school opposes all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination.

The school publicly supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.

Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all groups.

The school caters for the dietary and dress requirements of different groups subject to health and safety regulations.

The school enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular diversity and actively encourages all pupils to understand these.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. Actions taken are in line with relevant LA policies and guidance such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents.

All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with intolerant behaviour and that such behaviour is always unacceptable.

Staff will attend training courses to enable them to deal effectively with bullying, discriminatory incidents, harassment and prejudice.

2023-2025 Equality Objectives

Each year the school will set specific equality targets to improve the provision set out within this policy.

School equality objectives for 2023-2025 are:

1. To continue to improve accessibility for pupils with medical conditions, mental health issues and disabilities within school. Arrange appropriate provisions and training.
2. To increase staff awareness of issues surrounding Equality through ongoing CPD.
3. To continue to provide our children with opportunities to discuss information relating to all aspects of equality and diversity.
4. To review our SMCS/RE/Cultural curriculum that is equal to all children.

Leadership & Management

- School policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities.
- The Governing Body and the school leadership set a clear ethos that reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community.
- The school promotes positive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.
- The school leadership will work in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity and oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.
- Governors and Staff contribute to policy documents. Parents can request to see policies and have their views taken into account.

Staffing: Recruitment & Professional Development

- The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures that are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process.
- Equalities, policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions
- All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact

Curriculum

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity , backgrounds and needs of all pupils.

The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated where appropriate to ensure the inclusion of:

- Boys and girls;
- Pupils learning English as an additional language;
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups;
- Pupils who are gifted and talented;
- Pupils with special educational needs;
- Pupils who are looked after by the local authority;
- Pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds.

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.

Extra-curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

Teaching & Learning

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all their contributions are valued.

All pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum.

Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles and takes account of pupils' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs.

Teachers take positive steps to include all groups or individuals.

Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender, SEND and social background.

Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. All pupils are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem-solving tasks.

Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.

Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

Assessment, Achievement & Progress

All pupils have the opportunity to achieve the highest standards. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The school ensures that assessment is as free of gender, cultural and social bias as possible, and that assessment methods are valid.

The school monitors and analyses pupil performance by gender, ethnicity, SEND and those entitled to pupil premium and is therefore able to identify groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

Self-assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on progress.

All pupils are given full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment that summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning.

Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress.

Behaviour, Discipline & Exclusions

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils.

The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that having a protected characteristic may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline as stated within the school's behaviour policy.

Pupils, staff, parents and governors are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour that is damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable.

Personal Development & Pastoral Care

Pastoral support takes differences into account, and the experiences and needs of all individuals.

Appropriate support is given to victims of harassment and intolerant behaviour, using the support of external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt with in accordance with school policies and provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

Admissions & Attendance

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all pupils, so that pupils from particular groups are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admission forms.

The school and families are aware of rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision would be made for leave of absences for religious observance that includes staff as well as pupils.

Provision would be made for pupils on extended leave so that they are able to continue with their learning.

Partnership with Parents & the Community

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.

The school works in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific incidents.

Meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

Responsibilities

The role of Governors

The Governing Body has a commitment to equal opportunities and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.

The Governing Body collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress, and that no group of pupils is underachieving.

To do this, we monitor:

admissions

attainment

exclusions

rewards and sanctions

parents' and pupils' questionnaires

The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people from the 'protected groups' as defined by The Equality Act 2010 (see section 1.2 above) are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school.

The Governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.

The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion has a bearing on school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively, and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

The role of the Head Teacher

It is the Head Teacher's role to implement the school's policy on equal opportunities, and they are supported by the Governing Body in so doing.

It is the Head Teacher's role to make sure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The Head Teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against.

The Head Teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training.

The Head Teacher promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in the assembly, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school.

The Head Teacher views all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due concern.

The Governing Body and Head Teacher will ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation.

The Governing Body and Head Teacher will ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Head Teacher will ensure that all staff members are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

The role of the Class Teacher

Class Teachers recognise their own prejudices, but do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.

We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues.

All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any incidents in the school log book and draw them to the immediate attention of the Head Teacher.

Monitoring & Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The Governors will therefore:

- Monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school.
- Monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against.
- Require the Head Teacher to report to Governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy; take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity.
- Monitor the school's behaviour policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or earlier if it is considered necessary.