

# The Norwood School Equalities and Accessibility Policy 2022 2023

Approved by: Full Governing Body

Date: December 2022

Next review due by: September 2023

## Contents

Introduction

Purpose of the policy

Development of the policy

Links to other policies and documentation

Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

Advancing equality of opportunity between different groups

Positive Action

What we are doing to foster good relations

Other ways we address equality issues

Publishing Equality Objectives

Our Equality Objectives for 2022-2024

Roles and Responsibilities

Key contacts

Equal Opportunities for staff

Mental Health and Well-being Commitment

Monitoring and Reviewing the policy

Disseminating the policy

## Introduction

The Norwood School School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every member of our school community and where all members are equally valued. Racism, in any form, will not be tolerated in our school. We will work to eradicate all forms of racism and prejudice and we will regularly review our systems and procedures to ensure this happens.

We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination and racism, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties 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.

Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles: All members of our community are 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 and whatever their sexual orientation.

We recognise, respect and value differences. We take account of this and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected, embraced and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

We actively promote positive attitudes, mutual respect and relationship building between groups and communities different from each other.

We foster a shared sense of creativity, cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

We promote a culture of citizenship that is at the heart of the school's ethos to promote values of community, participation and democracy.

We develop Student Voice, ensuring that every child matters and has an active role in developing the school community in its widest possible sense.

We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

We have the highest expectations of all our students. We expect that all students can make good progress and that all members of the community can achieve their highest potential.

We work to raise standards for all students, with a distinct focus on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of students raises standards across the whole school.

Our code of conduct requires commitment from each member of the school community and the acceptance of a code of conduct which:

- Encourages respect for the individual

- Encourages collective action to challenge prejudice
- Challenges stereotypical images and in their place promotes positive images
- Declares as unacceptable any language, action or belief that is prejudiced or encourages prejudice in others
- Challenges institutional and organisational structures which have prejudice or discriminatory effects

### **Purpose of the policy**

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against students or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity. Age, marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to students.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty” requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

### **Development of the policy**

This policy takes account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010, The Equality Act 2010 and schools - Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (May 2014) and also the most recent Ofsted inspection framework, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes, progress and provision for students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

### **Links to other policies and documentation**

Although this policy is the key document for information about Norwood School's approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, the approach outlined in this policy underpins all decision making in relation to our school transformation plan, policy reviews, self evaluation, the school prospectus, school website and newsletters.

There are also references to equalities in the behaviour, attendance, admissions, SEN and anti-bullying policies, as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and the student councils.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the ways we comply with this are found in all our related HR policies.

### **Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our students and the way we provide access for students to facilities, services, trips and visits. We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled students – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled students and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

The Co Headteachers ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities. We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

We will provide continued professional development in equality and diversity to ensure staff are empowered with the skills and information to address and support equality within the classroom.

We take seriously the need to consider equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day life of the school.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all, working together and the need for all to embrace diversity. Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against students by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

## Pregnancy & Maternity

Protection for students from discrimination or less favourable treatment because of pregnancy is required under the Equality Act 2010. Norwood School will ensure, if the situation arises within the school, that students are given support and the school ensures quality provision is made. Members of staff who become pregnant should arrange a meeting with the Co Head teachers, as soon as they are confident to do so, in order to ensure appropriate maternity provision is provided.

## Sex/Gender

As a fully inclusive mixed gender school, Norwood ensures that students of any gender are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment given to other students. The school operates a curriculum that allows all students to access lessons and every effort is made to combat gender stereotypes with regard to curriculum choices and career opportunities. The school's CIAG strategy addresses gender stereotypes.

## Sexual Orientation LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer)

We do not tolerate any form of behaviour of a HBT (homophobic, biphobic or transphobic) nature. Incidents of this kind are now officially reported through the reporting system which incorporates a specific tick box for HBT bullying. All incidents of this nature are taken seriously and dealt with by Senior staff. The leadership team is able to identify through this system if HBT bullying is on the rise and react accordingly.

The school ensures that all gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender students, or the children of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender parents are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other students.

Issues around LGBTQ+ and bullying will be addressed through assemblies, Learning for Life lessons and Let's Discuss Diversity Sessions in tutor time to ensure that the school generates a common language of acceptance of LGBTQ+ students and issues.

## **Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance**

The Norwood School Behaviour Policy makes reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for students with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

We aim to embed a restorative approach to misbehaviour, valuing the needs of all members of the school community.

### **Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying**

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

prejudices around disability and special educational needs, prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum, prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes.

All staff receive guidance on how incidents of bullying and prejudice should be reported, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously. A record of prejudice-related incidents is kept and a report is provided to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. This data is reviewed termly.

### **Advancing equality of opportunity between different groups**

We know the needs of our school population and we collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements. We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our student admissions meetings. We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of students and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills.

**We collect, analyse and publish data on:**

The school population by gender and ethnicity;

The % of students identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;

Each year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;

Inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English

All data is analysed in relation to the standards reached by different groups at the end of each data collection: White British, FSM and

non-FSM, Black African, Black Caribbean, EAL, all SEN and sub-categories, Looked after Children and other groups specific to each year cohort.

We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.

We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future students – we will for example, be sufficiently prepared if a Visually Impaired, Physically disabled, or student of an ethnic minority group not already within our school population joins our school.

We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any students' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able". We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all students. We provide support to students at risk of underachieving. We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

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, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds - girls and boys.

We ensure equality of access for all students to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

Our buildings are fully accessible. There is provision for those in wheelchairs and those with mobility impairments. Accessible toilets are located for both students and adults on each floor, there are four lifts in the school that give access to all areas and a medical space near the office provides accommodation for changing, hygiene and other specific needs. All classrooms and learning spaces are suitable for wheelchair users.

### **Positive Action**

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of students with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

### **What we are doing to foster good relations**

We prepare our students for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students. We teach about

difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE Life for Learning, 'Let's Talk About' and 'Let's Talk About Diversity' sessions, citizenship, assemblies and across the curriculum. We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping. We promote a whole school ethos that challenges prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

Norwood School will challenge the stigmatisation of LGBTQ+ families in lessons about families, marriage and stable relationships and ensure that LGBTQ+ families receive appropriate support during their time in the school. We will present a broad range of positive role models, including BAME and LGBTQ+ people both through and beyond the curriculum. Norwood School will work closely with families and members of our wider community to challenge stigmatisation and discrimination and ensure that appropriate support is in place and information is shared, including for LGBTQ+ students and their families.

We provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures. We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and promote positive images of people from a diverse range of cultures.

We provide opportunities for students to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences, for example Oracy lessons and Ignite presentations. We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events, eg Black History Month, National Careers Weeks and Anti-bullying Week and curriculum drop days.

We will build a curriculum around the students that we teach fostering their ability to question and then to develop informed opinions and decisions around the issues that they might face.

We will ensure that our curriculum reflects our students' lives, the experiences and history of the local community and people's lived experiences across the world.

We include Equalities matters in our Newsletters to parents and Carers and in items on the School website.

The Norwood School has robust systems around Safeguarding to ensure staff receive regular training on this.

We will ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all and will review these regularly in line with changes to employment law and procedures.



## **Anti Racist Award**

We are making progress towards the Anti Racist School Award.

The award takes a holistic approach to developing a culture of anti-racism in our school and will provide a framework to evidence policies and initiatives for both staff and pupils within the wider school community.

The award takes a whole school approach to anti-racism and covers five key competencies each with a series of statements that schools will work to embed, the five competencies are:

1. Governance, Leadership and Management
2. School Environment
3. Professional Learning and Development
4. The Curriculum
5. Parents / Carers and Community Partnerships

We want to create a culture of anti-racist education and action in our school, which supports the decolonisation of our curriculum, develops staff and students to live in a multicultural society and, in particular, develops positive relationships with BAME parents/carers and those in the community.

The Norwood School will develop an implementation plan and guide the school community through a process of building the skills and knowledge needed to bring about whole school improvements in anti-racist education.

## **Other ways we address equality issues**

We maintain records of all training relating to equalities. Our monitoring records include evaluations of aspects of equalities. We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed. We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well-being of our students. The implications for equalities of all new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

Review relevant feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' evenings, the Friends of Norwood (parent forum), Governors' parent-consultation

meetings and parent input into EHC Plans, statements of SEND and other SEND meetings.

Secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events

Review feedback and responses from students and groups of students, from the student council, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school.

Analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;

Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's working groups.

## **Mental Health and Well-being Commitment**

*The Norwood School will;*

- Identify areas of risk to physical and mental health so that they can be minimised and managed appropriately.
- Promote a culture of care and concern for our school community, which demands that everybody accepts responsibility for their own and others' wellbeing.
- Promote a culture of open conversation so we talk about our wellbeing and mental health having our networks in mind and make support available when members of our community may be struggling.
- Provide a comprehensive training offer for staff aimed at providing colleagues with tools for managing their wellbeing, including mental health.
- Provide a comprehensive PSHE 'Learning for Life' curriculum for students that explores the full breadth of well-being from managing exam stress to body image.
- Put in place a system of management practices, which enables employees to enjoy a healthy work-life balance, whilst recognising the impact of personal choice and lifestyle.
- Ensure the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well being.
- Make sure working environments are healthy, safe, secure and suitable.

*In order to achieve this Norwood School will;*

- Ensure children have regular access to specialist provision, E.g. music, art and sport, shows the importance placed on the wider curriculum in our curriculum offer.
- Ensure children have regular opportunities to take part in learning beyond the classroom, this will show the importance we

place on the wider curriculum in our curriculum offer. E.g, trips, residential trips, school shows & performances and sports fixtures.

- Ensure children have access to 'Learning For Life' Lessons, assemblies, tutor support, oracy lessons, Let's Talk About and Let's Discuss Diversity sessions. This enables open and free discussions around key issues.
- Ensure mental health problems are identified early and appropriate support provided through our pastoral support systems.
- Make sure that all staff know the importance of mental health. There are several Mental Health First Aid trained staff.
- We have a well-being lead Governor Carries Ross.
- Senior staff ensure that there are a range of supports and activities in place to support good mental health.
- Make sure that the IT curriculum provides pupils with up to date skills within technology including e-safety awareness.
- Develop an anti-bullying policy with contributions from the School Council
- Have comprehensive safeguarding procedures in place. Images of our safeguarding team are displayed around the school, in the presentations for each Learning for life Lesson and in our student handbook. Children are aware of who they can go to if they have any concerns.
- Ensure that rigorous and supportive pastoral care systems are in place.
- Offer appropriate counselling services to all students.

**Our commitment to Mental Health and Well-being Commitment will mean that**

- Students and staff feel supported and have mutual trust, respect.
- Students and staff feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Students at Norwood School are engaged in their learning.
- Behaviour incidents at social times will have reduced due to positive engagement in enrichment activities.
- Our students enjoy developing their knowledge and understanding of the rich, cultural heritage of modern Britain.
- Parents will play an increasingly engaged role in the overall life of the school, including through The Friends of Norwood.
- Student questionnaires will demonstrate that students feel safe and well cared for in our school. They identify who can help them and who they can talk to.

## Publishing Equality Objectives

In line with this policy and the Norwood School vision we publish an Equality Action plan that is monitored by the Governing Body and its relevant committees.

Norwood School's vision for 2022-24 is to ensure that as a school we are:

1. Delivering excellence
2. Encouraging ambition
3. Uncovering talent
4. Maintaining a focus on progress
5. Working closely with our parents
6. Ensuring that communication is effective, timely and informative
7. Making good use of our many partnerships to underpin the success of students and staff

This vision applies to all members of the school community equally and seeks, through school planning priorities, to reduce attainment gaps between different groups and to develop a thriving school community where all achieve their full potential, regardless of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

The equality objectives that we identify stem from our school's priorities and are the outcome of reviews and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. We produce Equality data Analysis which informs our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

### Our Equality Objectives for 2022-2023 are:

To improve outcomes for all students including those with protected characteristics so that they make progress at least in line with expectations based on their prior attainment and ability.

To enable all students including those in groups with protected characteristics, to make a positive contribution to school life.

To promote mental health and well-being so that all members of the school community are valued and supported, regardless of special educational needs and disability, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

To develop processes around all transition points for all students, including those in groups with protected characteristics to ensure that appropriate advice, guidance and support is in place to ensure successful transition to next steps.

To promote equal working conditions for all staff regardless of disability, race, ethnicity, sex, religion, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

## (Appendix A)

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies primarily with Senior Team and Governors

We review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, students, governors and parents and carers. We publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents and carers, on the school website.

#### **It is our responsibility to:**

Monitoring work on equality issues

Monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents)

Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of students

Monitoring exclusions and isolations

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

#### **Reporting an incident of discrimination or prejudice with regards to any of the protected characteristics, or any incident deemed to be in contradiction to this policy:**

An incident can be reported by any member of the school community, either directly to a Head of Year or senior member of staff, or by emailing the concern to: [cole.r@thenorwoodschool.org](mailto:cole.r@thenorwoodschool.org) or [clemenger.n@thenorwoodschool.org](mailto:clemenger.n@thenorwoodschool.org) This concern will be swiftly followed up and the person who reported the concern will be updated on any relevant action.

This process for reporting incidents will be regularly shared with all members of the school community.

### **Governing Body**

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.

Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the

school environment. Governors annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

### **Co Headteachers and Leadership team**

The Co Headteachers are 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. They will ensure all appointment panels are transparent and give due regard to this Policy, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities and that all staff work in an environment that is free from harassment. The Co Headteachers will treat all acts of discrimination and unfair treatment seriously and monitor all incidents of a discriminatory nature.

The Co Heads will highlight the expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting annually and provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction and ongoing CPD process

A senior leadership member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes. This colleague has expert and informed knowledge of the Equality Act.

### **Teaching and Support Staff**

Our staff will ensure that they are aware of the background of all children that they teach and that all students are treated equally and with respect. We will not under any circumstance negatively discriminate against any child. Our teachers will read all the 'provision maps' for the students they teach and plan activities that pay due regard to the racial, cultural and personal sensitivities of the class. We will strive to incorporate diversity in a positive way which challenges stereotypes and assumptions in lessons.

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom, challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability maintain the highest expectations of success for all students
- support different groups of students in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may

(sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult

- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

## **Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to support the School's Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Policy. Where a child has intentionally behaved in an unfair, unjust or discriminatory manner it is the expectation that the parents/carers will support the sanction applied. The school works collaboratively with parents/carers so a strong and consistent message is delivered about appropriate behaviour.

## **Students**

Students are to abide by this policy, in school and when travelling to and from school. When witnessing an incident of discrimination, a student must report it. A child who is a victim must report it to an appropriate adult so that the School can deal with the matter swiftly and effectively.

## **Visitors**

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters, and on the website, to enable them to do this.

## **Key contacts**

Deputy Headteachers Jessie Nicholas, Jeremy Cox, Ivan O'Brien Coker, James O'Sullivan and Marcus Condron.

## **Equal Opportunities for staff**

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

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

### **Monitoring and Reviewing the policy**

We review the information about equalities in the policy every three years and make adjustments as appropriate. Our review involves students, staff, governors and parents and carers.

### **Disseminating the policy**

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives and data is available on the school website. It is also available:

- as paper copies in the school office
- as a summary in the staff handbook
- on display for visitors, including parents and carers
- as part of induction for new staff and new governors

We ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy, objectives and data through the school newsletter, website, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

We publish on the school's website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs.