



NORTHGATE
High School

Equalities Policy

Respect | Determination | Teamwork

Review period: Annual

Review by: Mr A Bluck

Date Reviewed: October 2024

Next Review: October 2025

Equalities policy

1.1 Principles of our approach

The key to our approach is understanding and tackling the different barriers, which could lead to unequal outcomes for those people who have protected characteristics within school, while celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. Those people with protected characteristics are defined as those who may be susceptible to discrimination because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, less able or socio-economic background. These include students, students, teaching and support staff, parents, carers, governors, multi-agency staff linked to the school, visitors to school and contractors.

We value diversity and believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and governors to ensure compliance with and implementation of the policy by the whole school community as well as eliminating all unlawful discrimination. Visitors to the site will be expected to follow the principles laid down in this policy.

In forming this policy, we have been guided by documentation produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission; https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/good_equality_practice_for_employers_equality_policies_equality_training_and_monitoring.pdf

1.2 Objectives

- To treat all individuals with equal value.
- To eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- To foster positive attitudes and good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (i.e. tackle prejudice and promote understanding).
- To take such steps as are reasonable to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- To take such steps as are reasonable to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- To provide a range of education and training programmes which encourage everyone to participate in learning.
- To ensure that recruitment, retention and development of staff follows the equality principles.
- To ensure that all marketing activities and procurement processes meet equality and diversity best practice.
- To respect the religious beliefs and practices of all individuals.

Prejudice, discrimination, and victimisation are not tolerated, and we work hard to instil a strong understanding of right and wrong, including the importance of inclusion, acceptance, and compassion towards others.

In both its delivery of services and the employment of its staff, Northgate High School will ensure that no person will be discriminated against due to any of the protected characteristics as detailed in the Act. This includes discrimination due to association or perception (where it is believed that an individual has a particular characteristic). The characteristics protected by the act are:

- age (as an employer – but not applicable to students and students)
- disability
- ethnicity
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

This also extends to students affected by home circumstances, such as being a Young Carer.

The Equality Act 2010 provides positive action provisions that allow Northgate High School to use targeted measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, individuals with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will only be used where they are considered proportionate in order to achieve the relevant aim.

This policy and the Equality Act deal with the way in which Northgate High School treats its current and prospective staff and / or students but the relationship between one individual and another is not within its scope.

In the execution of its duties Northgate High School will be required to gather data, report on progress and publicise information. The school will ensure that this is done in line with the school's Data Protection Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Equality Action Plan (published annually in the Autumn Term).

Any alleged breach of this policy will be taken seriously and where proven, breaches may lead to formal disciplinary action.

1.3 Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the following circumstances:

- in line with changes to the equality objectives
- changes in legislation and / or government guidance
- as a result of any other significant change or event
- in the event that the policy is determined not to be effective

If there are urgent concerns these should be raised to the Assistant Headteacher/SENCO in the first instance to determine whether a review of the policy is required in advance of the review date.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Key Personnel

Headteacher: Miss R Mackie 01473 210123

Equalities Lead: Mrs R Bothwell-O'Hearn 01473 210123

Chairman of Governors: Mrs J Ferguson 01473 210123

Individuals in the school are expected to take responsibility for supporting and promoting equality in the school above and beyond the responsibilities listed below.

2.2 The School

The school is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the Equality Policy and to deal with unfair and / or unlawful discriminatory incidents. The school will promote equality of opportunity and diversity opposing unlawful discrimination against any member of the school community. All staff will:

- be up to date and aware of their responsibilities in regards to equality within the school
- engage in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to students
- promote a positive working environment
- report back to their managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, so that these incidents can be reviewed and action taken where necessary
- be aware that failure to comply with this policy may be grounds for disciplinary procedures to be initiated.

The Equality Lead

The Equality Lead is the first point of contact for any queries or concerns that arise relating to this policy. He/she will also:

- ensure that the Equalities Action Plan is completed and reviewed annually
- ensure that individuals are informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect them
- consider all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher, with the support of the rest of the senior leadership team, will ensure that this policy and its

procedures are implemented and followed by all staff. They will also:

- report back to the Governing Body on how the plan is working.
- take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation occurs .
- identify and investigate any patterns with regard to exclusions and poor attendance in respect of particular groups.
- ensure that the performance of different groups of students is monitored and evaluated so that the particular needs of different students can be met.
- ensure the impact of additional support on standards achieved is evaluated.

Governing Body

The Governing will ensure that all policies promote the equality principles detailed in this policy. In addition to they will ensure that the school:

- effectively communicates and adopts this policy throughout the school correctly.
- complies with all equality legislation.
- sets equality objectives.
- monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the equality policy on a regular basis, making any amendments to improve on the plan when and where necessary.
- monitors educational outcomes, incidents of harassment and discrimination, and referrals by a range of criteria including disability.
- observes the provisions in this policy in relation to recruitment, selection and promotion procedures.
- ensures that resources are allocated to the promotion of equality of opportunity.

3. Policy Commitments

3.1 Promoting Equality – Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, learning and teaching will endeavour to:

- Ensure equality of access to the whole school experience for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- A commitment to upholding anti-racist practices;
- Promote attitudes, values and skills that challenge discriminatory behaviour;
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture, religion and beliefs and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions;
- Develop students' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, and challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality;
- Ensure that the curriculum covers issues of equality, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion;
- Prepare students for living in a multicultural society and promote good relations between different racial groups;
- Celebrate diversity and promote (where appropriate) the positive contribution of different ethnic minority groups to the curriculum area as well as profiling the positive contributions made to society by other minority groups;
- Celebrate what we have in common;
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that involve all student groupings;
- Take account of the different learning styles of different groups of students, using an appropriate range of teaching strategies to enable all students to progress;
- Utilise seating plans to foster effective learning;
- Take account of the performance of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of students;

- Identify resources that support staff development – for example, Teaching and Learning and CPD opportunities to support staff in their planning for inclusion and equality.

3.2 Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all students regardless of age, gender, race, disability, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes for all our young people, we recognise the importance of:

- Teacher commitment, expertise and enthusiasm as a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all students;
- Adults in the school providing good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality and diversity;
- The school as a whole placing a high priority on the provision for those with special educational needs and disabilities. We strive to meet all students' learning needs including the more able;
- The school providing an environment in which all students have equal access to all facilities and resources;
- Creating an environment where all students are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning;
- Encouraging students and parents to create an appropriate learning environment at home and providing them with advice about how to do this;
- Providing opportunities for completing homework beyond the school day on the school site;
- Using a range of teaching methods throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all students.

3.3 Curriculum

At Northgate High School we actively recognise differences and aim to ensure that:

- Our planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes, promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity;
- Students will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality;
- Steps are taken to ensure that all students have access to mainstream curriculum by taking into account the cultural and lifestyle backgrounds of all students, their linguistic needs and their learning styles;
- All students have access to qualifications as appropriate to the qualifying standards which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression.

3.4 Ethos and Atmosphere

We are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community. To this end:

- There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere and mutual respect which welcomes everyone to the school;
- The students are encouraged to greet visitors to the school, and adults within the school, with friendliness and courtesy;
- The displays around the school should be of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of school life and are frequently monitored;
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

3.5 Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within Northgate is a high priority. These resources will:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society;
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints;
- Show positive images of different ethnic groups, males and females in society, and people with disabilities;
- Reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context;
- Include materials to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues
- Be equally accessible to all members of school community, consistent with health and safety
- Not promote explicitly or implicitly racist, anti-disability, sexist, homophobic or ageist views.

3.6 Language

We recognise that it is important that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes;
- Does not intentionally offend;
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document;
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem;
- Recognises the individuality and background of all members of the school community, with everyone endeavouring to spell and pronounce names correctly;
- Uses appropriate terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals.

3.7 Provision for Bilingual/Multilingual Students

We will make appropriate provision for all EAL/bilingual children/groups in Years 7-11 to ensure access to an appropriate curriculum. These groups may include:

- Traveller and Gypsy Roma children;
- Those from refugee families;
- Asylum seekers;
- Students for whom English is an additional language;
- Students who are new to the United Kingdom.

3.8 Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Pastoral staff take account of disability needs, gender, religious and racial differences, sexual orientation and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker students;
- All students are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender or race;
- All students/staff/parents/carers are given support as appropriate when they experience or perceive discrimination. We also recognise that the perpetrators of discrimination are themselves sometimes victims of their personal circumstances and therefore where appropriate remedial work is done to ensure that the actions do not occur again;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of students can see themselves reflected in the school community;
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

3.9 Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of the school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour. It will address this duty in a number of different ways, e.g.:

- Incidents where there are unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) will be tackled. The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender);
- All bullying related to those with protected characteristics will be referred to an appropriate member of staff and be dealt with as a serious incident – and will be recorded and investigated thoroughly;
- Incidents involving those with protected characteristics – specifically incidents relating to race, disability or homophobia - will be recorded as such and remedial intervention made. It will be the norm for parents/carers of the victim and the perpetrator to be notified of the incident, unless there are specific circumstances that make this inappropriate.

3.10 Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to help all students to achieve their potential. For example:

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school; parents evenings, transition events, communication through Schoolcomms, volunteering.
- Encouraging parents/carers to contact the school if they have any concerns about equality and diversity issues – the first point of contact should be the Pastoral team responsible for the Year group who will liaise with the member of Senior Management with responsibility for Equality and Diversity;
- Encouraging members of the local community to regularly join in school activities e.g. for example parent forums

3.11 Staffing and Staff Development

- We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This will include student's access to a balance of male and female staff at different key stages when possible.
- We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.

It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of students in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

3.12 Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised formally;
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure good practice which takes account of equalities through the recruitment and selection process;
- The school encourages applicants from all sections of the community;
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds;
- All supply staff are made aware of equalities policies and practices;
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact;
- As part of the staff recruitment process all applicants are asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. Summary information will be reviewed by the Governors Personnel Committee.

4. Disability

The disability provisions in the Equality Act are different from those for the other protected characteristics in a number of ways. In particular, the Act works in only one direction; it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. The school may treat a disabled person more favourably than a person who is not disabled and therefore may have to make reasonable adjustments to practices to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit to the same extent that a person without that disability can.

Northgate High School continuously considers and reviews its facilities and physical features to ensure that it is inclusive and accessible for all people as part of its general accessibility planning. The school Accessibility Plan aims to:

- increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum.
- improve the physical environment to enable disabled students, staff and visitors to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided.
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled people.

4.1 Making reasonable adjustments

Northgate High School will make reasonable adjustments for individuals in the event that the school does something that places a disabled person at a disadvantage compared to other people.

Reasonable steps will be taken to try to avoid the disadvantage of disabled persons. This will particularly be the case where a student's Education Health and Care Plan does not provide the auxiliary aid or service. There should be no assumption, however, that if an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEN regime then it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. All decisions would depend on the facts of each individual case.

Auxiliary aids or services will be provided when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the person faces in comparison to non-disabled individuals.

Guidance 1 from the Equality and Human Rights Commission will be used to assist in determining when it would be reasonable for the school to make adjustments: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-codes-practice#h1>

5. Staff discipline and suspension

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff are treated fairly and consistently and this is held to account through our staff performance, discipline, conduct, and grievance policies and procedures.

Staff performance will be monitored and we expect that staff will feel able to voice complaints and grievances in confidence, trusting that the school will deal with their grievances fully, promptly, and fairly.

6. Measuring the Impact of this Policy

Each policy, and any other relevant policies as outlined in the specific duties placed upon us by the relevant legislation, will be evaluated and monitored for their impact on students, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school. As part of this process an action plan will be drawn up to enable impact assessment to be undertaken.

Northgate High School will keep up to date records concerning the disabilities present within the school community and will collect this information through data collection annually.

The school will publish any objectives i.e steps towards addressing concerns identified by this process annually.

7. Complaints

All complaints are dealt with under the Complaints Procedure.

Complaints should be made in writing and will follow the complaint procedures and set timescales.

The handling of complaints may be delegated to an appropriate person.