NEW HEIGHTS SCHOOL
Focus · Learn · Achieve

Equality and Diversity Policy

Status	**Non-Statutory**
Responsible Governors' Committee	**Full Governing Body**
Date last approved by GB	**November 2025**
Responsible Person	**Co-Headteachers**
To Review Date	**November 2026**
Last Amended Date	**October 2020**

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Equality Policy for New Heights School brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

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

We welcome our responsibility to promote community cohesion and are committed to developing good relations across different cultures, ethnic, religious (and non- religious) and socio-economic groups. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

1.2 Over recent years, schools have (in line with other institutions and public bodies) been working towards an improved understanding of the diverse nature of their communities, and recognising their role in promoting an understanding of equality for different groups of people. Much of this work is in response to legislation that places an increased duty on schools and other settings, but it also sits within the specific context of a school's role in providing learning and opportunities for all - it is about fairness, rights and justice.

1.3 Equality legislation exists to protect people but also to try and advance equality. Inequality still persists in the UK despite 40 years of equality legislation. We know that some groups do less well than their peers in terms of progress, achievement and later life chances. This picture is reflected nationally. The recognition of diversity and promotion of inclusive and equality practices will help to overcome this disparity.

1.4 The new Equality Act 2010 harmonises and streamlines legislation that has come before it. The Act refers to protected characteristics:

- Age (relevant to staff only in our context)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (relevant to staff only in our context)

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on public bodies including maintained schools and Academies.

2. Model Equality Policy

The Governing Body of New Heights School has adopted this policy. The policy will be reviewed annually to update the action plan.

3. Overall aims of our Equality Policy

3.1 To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes.

3.2 Overall, our aim is:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

4. Application of the Policy

4.1 Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – students, staff, parents / carers, visitors and partner agencies – with whom we have engaged and who will contribute to the ongoing development of our policy and equalities work.

4.2 The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

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

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve students, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

5. Our approach

5.1 We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

5.2 We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality.

- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better.

- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other.

- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community.

- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and

the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere.

- Conduct Equality Impact Assessments of our functions and policies.

- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities.

- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

6. Our vision statement about Equality

6.1 Our school seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

6.2 We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

6.3 We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

7. Our Duties

7.1 We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and will seek to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all. We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

7.2 We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

7.3 These opportunities may include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities:

- The engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies.
- Preparation for entry to the school.
- School policies.
- Breaks and lunchtimes.
- The provision of school meals.
- Interaction with peers.
- Opportunities for assessment and accreditation (where relevant)
- Exam arrangements (where relevant)
- Behaviour management approach and sanctions.
- Exclusion procedures.
- School clubs, activities and school trips.
- The school's arrangements for working with other agencies.
- Preparation of students for the next phase of education.
- Learning and teaching and the planned curriculum.
- Classroom organisation.
- Timetabling.
- Grouping of students.
- Homework.
- Access to school facilities.
- Activities to enrich the curriculum.
- School sports.
- Employees' and staff welfare.

8. Roles and Responsibilities within our School

8.1 The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of the Policy and will ensure that staff and others mentioned as follows are aware of their responsibilities and they are given necessary training and support. The Headteacher will carry out this responsibility by:

- Ensuring that the Governing Body, all staff, parents / carers, students, visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy.
- Overseeing the effective implementation of the policy.
- Ensuring staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy.
- Developing partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available.
- Monitoring the policy and reporting to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information.
- Ensuring that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it.
- Ensuring that Equality Impact Assessments are conducted on functions and policies.

8.2 The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and will:

- Designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy.
- Ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- Support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary.
- Engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy.
- Evaluate and review the Policy and Action Plan annually.

8.3 The School Leadership Team will:

- Have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this Policy.
- Provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy.
- With the Headteacher, provide advice / support in dealing with any incidents / issues.

- Assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP.

8.4 Our students will:

- Understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability.
- Be expected to act in accordance with the Policy.
- Be encouraged to actively support the Policy.

8.5 Our parents / carers will:

- Have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements including the website.
- Be encouraged to actively support the Policy.
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy.
- Be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

8.6 Our staff i.e., every adult working within the school, will:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the school, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for students with additional needs and maintain a good awareness of equalities issues.
- Be involved in the development of the Policy and how it relates to them.
- Receive training.

8.7 Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies will:

- Be encouraged to support the Policy
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy

8.8 Our Curriculum will:

- Ensure that curriculum planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross-curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity.
- Ensure the classroom is an inclusive environment in which students feel their contributions are valued.
- Ensure positive steps are taken to include students who may otherwise be marginalised. We take account of students' cultural backgrounds, experiences and starting points and are responsive to students' different learning styles. All students are regularly consulted about their learning.

The school recognises and values all forms of achievement. We will monitor and analyse student performance by ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational need and social background. Any disparities which are identified will be addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support. Any funding received to promote learning for identified groups, e.g. those entitled to free school meals or not achieving desired level of attainment will be targeted to these groups. We will use our Management Information Systems (MIS) to identify and monitor these students.

9. Using information

9.1 We will use data and other information about our school as a common sense measure to determine the effects of a policy, practice or project on different groups and in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

10. Commissioned services (buying in services)

10.1 We are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services and we will ensure that equality issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from suppliers, we will ask the following questions of ourselves to help ensure that equality issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote

equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

10.2 We will ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

11. Our Staff

11.1 We value our staff for their ability and potential to help us make the best possible provision for the children in our school. Our policies and programmes benefit all members of staff in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- Whether or not they are disabled.
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation and faith, national origin or national status.
- Whatever their gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Irrespective of other factors such as age, income, family circumstances or where they live.

We will comply fully with legislation which protects our staff from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we will make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure prior to interview and selection.

11.2 We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

11.3 We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

11.4 We will ensure that our staff receive diversity training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as a group to help them understand their equality duties / and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

Religious Observance

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

All staff will be offered the opportunity to engage in appropriate development to ensure they can support the achievement of our Guiding Principles.

12. Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying

12.1 Clear procedures are in place so that all forms of bullying and harassment are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently. All forms of bullying and harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant policies.

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice –based bullying behaviour are driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people, sexism and other forms of discrimination. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

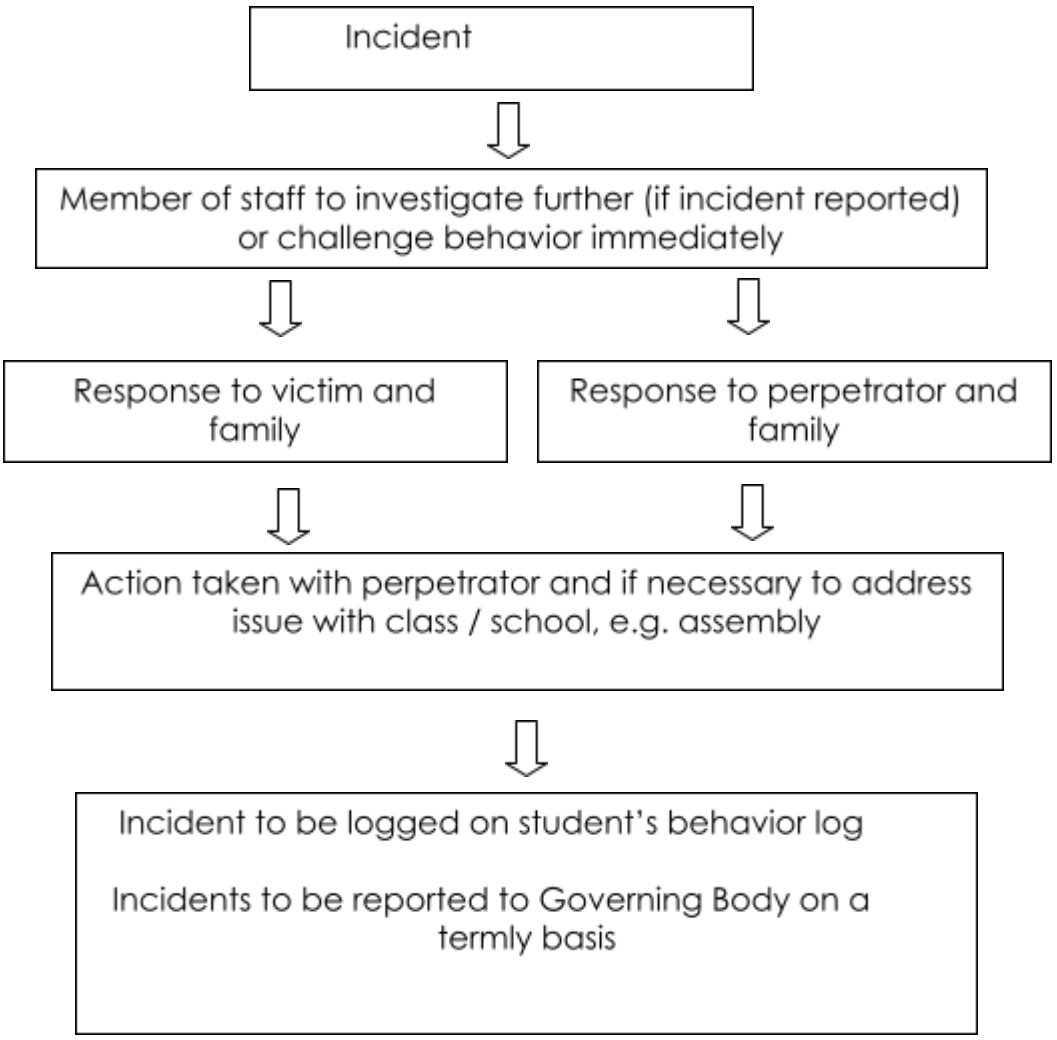
12.2 We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

12.3 Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities of human relationships in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

12.4 We will keep a record of hate and prejudice-related incidents and where requested by an appropriate authority can provide a report about the numbers, types and seriousness of these incidents and how they are dealt with. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

12.5 It should be clear to students and staff how they report incidents. All staff should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

The procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:



13. Implementation, monitoring and reviewing

13.1 Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our School Leadership Team and our Governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

13.2 We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

14. Equality Objectives – Our Equality Action Plan

14.1 This policy and plan will be published on our school website and hard copies available from the school office. We will ensure that the content of this policy is known to all governors and staff and as appropriate to all students and their parents and carers.

14.2 All governors and staff will have access to a range of resources that discuss and explain the concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion.

14.3 Using the views of students, parents / carers, staff and community and analysis of available information above we will set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. The Action Plan will be reviewed every year.

14.4 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended by the Governing Body at any time.

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	Who is responsible for implementing?	What are the timeframes?	Early success indicators
All	Publish and promote the Equality Plan through the school website, newsletter and staff meetings.	Question about parent awareness of Equality Scheme in annual survey?	Headteacher / designated member of staff	Immediately after Equality Plan is agreed by Governing Body	Staff are familiar with the principles of the Equality Plan and use them when planning lessons, creating class room displays Parents / carers are aware of the Equality Plan
All	Monitor and analyse student achievement by race, gender and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for students.	Achievement data analysed by race, gender and disability	Headteacher / Governing Body	In line with whole school tracking of students	Analysis of teacher assessments / annual data demonstrates the gap is narrowing for equality groups
All	Monitor and analyse student attendance and persistent absenteeism by race, gender and disability and act on any trends or	Attendance data analysed by race, gender and disability	Headteacher / Governing Body	In line with whole school tracking	Analysis of Attendance Data demonstrates that students in these cohorts are not disproportionately represented in PA category

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	Who is responsible for implementing?	What are the timeframes?	Early success indicators
	patterns in the data that require additional support for students.				
All	Ensure that the curriculum promotes role models that young people positively identify with, which reflects the school's diversity in terms of race, gender and disability.	Increase in students' participation, confidence and achievement levels	Through curriculum lesson plans	Sept 2024 – July 2025	Notable increase in participation and confidence of targeted groups
All	Ensure that displays in classrooms and corridors promote diversity in terms of race, gender and ethnicity.	Increase in student participation, confidence and positive identity – monitor through PSHE	Headteacher	Ongoing	More diversity reflected in school displays across all year groups
All	Ensure all students are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the Student Voice	Student Voice representation monitored by race, gender, disability	SLT	Sept 2024 – July 2025	More diversity in school council membership

Equality Strand	**Action**	**How will the impact of the action be monitored?**	**Who is responsible for implementing?**	**What are the timeframes?**	**Early success indicators**
All	Ensure all students from low income families are able to achieve at a similar level to the remainder of the students.	This is funded specifically through Pupil Premium and the Free School Meals cohort will be monitored.	A member of the School Leadership Team.	Reporting: Annual	Awareness raised and the gap between the cohorts reduced.
Race Equality Duty	Identify, respond and report racist incidents as outlined in the Plan. Report the figures to the Governing Body on an annual basis.	The Headteacher / Governing Body will use the data to assess the impact of the school's response to incidents e.g. have whole school / year group approaches led to a decrease in incidents, can repeat perpetrators be identified, are students and parents satisfied with the response?	Headteacher / Governing Body	Reporting: Annual	Teaching staff are aware of and respond to racist incidents

Equality Strand	**Action**	**How will the impact of the action be monitored?**	**Who is responsible for implementing?**	**What are the timeframes?**	**Early success indicators**
Continue to monitor the physical environment of the school	Ensure all students have access to the school	Increased provision in place for disabled students for activities such as disabled sporting activities.	Business Manager	In line with H & S Checks	Health & safety aspects - awareness of issues by site team.
Improve delivery of information	Improve the delivery to all students who are on the SEND register.	Audit of curriculum areas and whole school information See SEND	SEND-Co	Sept 2024 – July 2025	Information such as newsletters, notices, worksheets etc. are available in the appropriate