

Whittingham Primary School

Published equality information about the context of our school (2023)

Published objectives 2021-2025 (Updated March 2023)

This is the information (January 2023) which we have a duty to publish about our school and the ways in which we work to eliminate differences of outcome for groups with protected characteristics. It includes information about the work we do to promote equality and challenge discrimination.

The school has data on its composition broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender and by proficiency in English. This is available on request

The school is a small, rural primary school in the Alnwick Partnership in Northumberland. The school web site outlines our ambitions for the children, our place in the national and global community and our vision for learning.

We teach children about their rights and the school's aspiration that pupils become resilient, respectful and responsible citizens of our community and the wider world. We prioritise learning about respect for one another and the wider communities to which pupils belong. We celebrate individuality and the unique talents and characteristics of each child. Our school promotes and teaches children to appreciate pluralistic British values.

A small number of our pupils currently speak English as an Additional Language. There are very few pupils in school with an ethnicity other than white British, which makes our school population considerably less culturally diverse than the county average (4.7%) and which contrasts with the national average in state funded primary schools (34.8%).

Our disadvantaged pupils in respect of whom we receive the Pupil Premium or Forces Premium Grants are reported on as a discrete group (if the group is large enough that describing our spend does not identify the individual children) in order to demonstrate the effect of the funding on diminishing the differences in outcomes for these pupils compared with their peers. We use the funding effectively to offer academic support and guidance (when it is needed) using evidence-based approaches. The funding is also used to offer social and emotional support to children. We also subsidise access to some of our school visits, experiences, residential, enrichment, extra-curricular activities music tuition and swimming. We have under the [national average](#) of 22.5% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals

Objectives relating to children eligible for Free School Meals have a significant priority for schools, in spite of financial disadvantage not being a protected characteristic in law. Some eligible pupils also have additional protected characteristics.

Small cohorts of children and variations in intake can make it difficult to define trends in underachievement or vulnerability in groups of children on the basis of gender, ethnicity or disability. It is not uncommon to find a year group with a small number of boys or girls. We respond to the needs of children as individuals.

In teaching and learning, we represent, discuss and welcome family diversity and the positive aspects of individuality in families. We challenge any perception that family diversity may be uncomfortable for some members of the community to accept; our priority is that every child feels safe and knows that we are committed to our legal duty to keep them safe from discrimination. We audit resources and displays, letters home and the language we use for intentional and unconscious bias and aim to develop the capacity of the entire workforce to embody the school's inclusive ethos based on values of responsibility and caring citizenship. This is reflected in our inclusive PSHE curriculum, where children learn about different families, respectful and safe relationships and about appreciating and valuing differences.

The school has safe spaces for changing and using toilet facilities.

We support our pupils to succeed and achieve their full potential, academically, physically and socially in an atmosphere where they can grow and develop skills, values and attitudes that prepare them well for life in modern Britain. Our school uniform expectation is flexible, and the guidance does not discriminate against any child on the basis of sex, gender, race, disability, gender identity or belief.

The school has data on its composition broken down by types of disability and special educational need.

Our school has clear protocols and targeted provision to support these pupils who are identified or have emerging SEND needs. The SEND local offer and SEND report are accessible from the school web site.

The school is an accessible building and has an accessible toilet and wheelchair accessible routes.

We consult with children and families when setting objectives for achievable and measurable objectives to make the school more accessible for children with disabilities. These are outlined in the school's accessibility plan. We consult with children and their families to establish and then work to eliminate any barriers which are preventing children from accessing and enjoying extra-curricular opportunities and events. We learned that many families no longer are able to return to school to collect children at the end of the day, so have more extra-curricular activities during lunch breaks.

We record and report instances of discriminatory language or bullying and have had no racist incidents to record to the local authority in recent years. We can report racist incidents using the [online form](#). We celebrate and discuss the benefits of diversity in society, and welcome opportunities to achieve this.

All staff and governors completed required Prevent training and recognise the relationship between hate crime and radicalisation or extremism. We are conscious of the vulnerability of people in the community to becoming involved in campaigns based on stigma or discrimination and welcome open discussion and debate with the children in order to dispel myths and misconceptions. One of the ways in which we do this is through regular discussion of current affairs and news topics. This develops critical thinking and extends the children's understanding to broader contexts than life in the north-east of England

We recognise that some of our pupils may have limited opportunities to experience the wider UK and urban contexts outside Northumberland, so we prioritise a programme of learning including planned visits and visitors to broaden understanding of the plural, multicultural, multi-faith context of modern Britain. The school records data about religion and belief when it is provided by parents through our data collection mechanism. This enables us to state with confidence that we are inclusive and sensitive with regard to pupils' religions and beliefs. This is helpful in ensuring that dietary requirements, worship or teaching about relationships are sensitive to faith and belief or non-belief.

Documentation and record-keeping

Our school has a statement of overarching equality policy published to the web site.

The school aims to extend children's understanding of fostering good relations and challenging discrimination in a practical context through the work we do on promoting friendship, dealing with feelings and feeling safe to share concerns with adults. The ethos of the school supports and underpins our commitment to the values of democracy, tolerance and mutual respect.

Responsibilities

All members of staff have responsibility for equalities and for meeting equality objectives.

All staff take responsibility for anti-discriminatory work in school.

The governor with responsibility for SEND in school also has a wider watching brief for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

Staffing

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

Behaviour and safety

There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents.

The school annually receives a report on the number of racist incidents reported to the Local Authority, which governors receive and discuss in the autumn term.

School council members are chosen to have diverse perspectives and lived experiences to reflect upon, which makes them good advocates for their peers. We know from our meetings that the majority of pupils feel safe from all kinds of bullying.

The school's anti-bullying policy is available from the web site.

Curriculum

There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to acceptance, mutual respect and making an active contribution to community cohesion.

The school ensures that children learn in an age-appropriate way to value and access their rights and safeguard those of other children.

There are activities across the curriculum, including PSHE and assemblies to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to help them to apply strong community values and develop the concept of global citizenship.

Consultation and involvement

The school has procedures for consulting and involving parents and carers, and for engaging with local groups and organisations, and has regard in these for the concerns and requirements of the Equality Act.

The school has procedures for finding out how pupils think and feel about the school and has regard for these in respect of the Equality Act.

We consult parents and carers through surveys and contact them via email and the school web site. We are able to respond quickly to any concern about perceived inequality, unlawful discrimination or harassment.

Part Two: Objectives

Schools and other public sector organisations subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

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

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Equality Objectives 2022- 25

Objective 1: To monitor and analyse pupil achievement and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils with protected characteristics. (Advance equality of opportunity)

Staff have an awareness of those pupils who still experience less robust resilience or confidence as a result of missing out on learning, interaction and face to face learning at school during the pandemic.

In school we have prioritised the creation of new, bright and positive spaces and areas to concentrate on delivering targeted support and interventions to increase self-esteem and support emotional resilience and mental health. Thrive trained practitioners will continue to offer interventions based on empathy and understanding neuroscience to help children to self-regulate and manage their emotions and challenges

Extra-curricular activities and positive changes to the school environment based upon consultation with the children will provide enrichment, opportunities for cooperation and time to talk to and interact with one-another.

Expected impact: Conversations, strategies and approaches will be seen to be working.

Evidence-based programmes supporting the progress of disadvantaged pupils, and those who require specialist cycles of support.

Objective 2: To ensure that children's and staff physical and mental well-being is supported. (Advance equality of opportunity)

There are noticeable gaps in learning and resilience in those pupils most affected by two lockdowns which interrupted learning. During the second of these lockdowns, it was only 1/3 of pupils who were not in regular attendance, and this has led to

decreased resilience and has impacted on socialisation and in some ways on developmental milestones.

The school hopes to access staff training on MECC (Making Every Contact Count). is an evidence-based approach to improving people's health and wellbeing by helping them change their behaviour, especially with regard to risk behaviours. Increasing the support available to help people to manage and improve their own health and wellbeing

One of the ways in which we do this in school is by inviting children to share their views about what is working well, and what we could do more of/better to make the school a place that supports emotional and physical wellbeing.

In strengthening pupil voice in this way, we are gradually moving from ambitious yet unachievable ambitions (swimming pool on site, longer holidays) towards suggestions and co-produced plans which are becoming easy to respond to, and we strengthen pupils' concepts of democratic decision making and influence by responding promptly to suggestions such as 'more time for reading', 'horse jumps and monkey bars outdoors' and 'having an early finish on a Friday'

We have started to address staff morale, resilience and wellbeing by renovating a space as a new staffroom and make purposeful acts of kindness to one another a part of our daily routine

Objective 3: To ensure parents and families feel supported to effectively promote home learning, by reviewing levels of parental and pupil engagement in homework to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement. (Advance equality of opportunity)

Many of our pupils with protected characteristics had very variable experiences of home based and technology-based learning during the pandemic.

This has led us to review equity of access and support in the home-based learning which we still require and set as homework. Some parents and carers express dissatisfaction with the amount or purpose of the homework being set (some say it is too much, others insufficient).

The purpose of this objective is to explore and define what the barriers are to developing homework activities that are meaningful, inspiring, achievable and engaging for all pupils, including family learning projects.

Objective 4: Develop and build upon successful strategies which promote good attendance and strategies that work well for pupils with vulnerabilities and protected characteristics to achieve their potential. (Advance equality of opportunity)

Pupils with SEND achieve well in school. The size of the school means that individualised approaches can support pupils to transition to their next setting with high expectations that they will be able to 'hit the ground running'.

This objective is to ensure that we maintain and develop this aspect of school life for any future pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities.

Children eligible for FSM remain a group whose achievement remains stubbornly hard to accelerate. The school continues to offer a range of support with academic interventions and self-esteem boosting programmes.

Children with poor attendance are being targeted by support that builds good relationships with family members, letters, supportive messaging through the headteacher's blog 'lost days mean this'.

3 different levels of letter have been introduced, and they are designed to spark a dialogue with parents and carers. The approach is designed to help unpick any reasons for low attendance, strategies that could be introduced; adjusting start times, collecting pupils, arranging times for an anxious parent to be on site, perhaps helping with gardening.

Impact: Subtle and sensitive approaches to vulnerable children will hopefully build trust, improve attendance and target achievement.

Objective 5: To ensure that despite our small size and rural location our pupils have opportunities to broaden their understanding of the wider world through visits, visitors and an engaging and relevant curriculum. (Fostering good relations)

Due to the rural nature of Whittingham, many of our pupils have limited experiences of urban and pluralistic contexts such as cities, public transport, escalators, theatres, cinemas, museums, shopping centres, places of worship and cultural diversity.

The post-pandemic context and cost of living crisis have both contributed to barriers to the kind of experiences we might once have been able to plan with relative ease; coach transport prices have increased dramatically, many of the places of worship and cultural importance we have visited in the past have a backlog of requests and are not as able as they once were to extend a welcome to school groups.

We hope to mitigate this lack of opportunity to foster good relations through visits by extending the repertoire of visits and visitors to school, and looking at projects such as No Outsiders to help us spark lively debate and discussion about diversity and inclusion in the wider UK context

These objectives replace the previous equality objectives set in April 2016.

Progress towards the objectives will be reviewed annually, and they will remain our objectives until April 2025, when they are due to be refreshed