



EQUALITY STATEMENT

March 2024-25

Passmores Co-operative Learning Community

Passmores Academy Statement on Equality

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act and schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children'
- DfE (2018) 'Gender separation in mixed schools'
- DfE (2018) 'Equality Act 2010: advice for schools'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. Protected characteristics are as follows:

Age*

Disability

Race, colour, nationality or ethnicity

Sex

Gender reassignment

Maternity and pregnancy

Religion and belief

Sexual orientation

Marriage and civil partnership*

* The protected characteristics of age and marriage and civil partnership apply to schools as employers, but not in relation to their provision for pupils.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In the way it provides education for pupils.
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- In relation to admissions.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

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.

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by eight principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as 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
- whatever their sexual identity.

We maintain an ethos of unconditional positive regard and place the learner's needs at the centre of all decisions involving them.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of adults and children of all genders are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between adults and children of all genders and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- We will guarantee that no redundancy is the result of direct or indirect prejudice. All disciplinary procedures are non-prejudicial, whether they result in warnings, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.

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:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- adults and children of all genders. Transgender people are explicitly covered by the PSED. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'transgender' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the community. We will ensure that no-one is singled out or treated less favourably in relation to gender reassignment, i.e. because they are trans or have trans parents, siblings or other family members. We recognise that gender reassignment does not necessarily involve physical change, and can be solely social and emotional. The same principles will apply to anyone who identifies as non-binary, although this is not identified as a Protected Characteristic.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely.

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to 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 consult and involve across the breadth of our intake.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit.

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- adults and children of all genders
- gay people as well as straight.

Principle 8: We base our policies and practices on sound evidence, taken from best practice visits and recent and relevant research.

We maintain quantitative and qualitative information which shows our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and on the basis of which we decide on specific and measurable objectives.

Evidence relating to equalities is integrated into our self-evaluation documentation.

Our objectives take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equality objectives under review and report regularly on progress towards achieving them.

PCLC Equality Objectives

Equality objective 1:

We will reduce or remove inequalities in attainment throughout the school, particularly inequalities related to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act. We will ensure that all children and young people, including children in care, meet their full academic potential by:

- ensuring access to the highest quality teaching and resources
- giving access to a positive and supportive school environment
- providing increased opportunities to receive a rounded educational experience including enrichment activities that are not limited by cost or accessibility.

Equality objective 2:

We will help children to fulfil their full potential, by supporting families and focusing support on improving the lives of the most vulnerable children, including those with protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act and those who experience discrimination, bullying or exclusion. We will achieve this by using a range of approaches including (but not exclusively):

- regular contact with parents/carers, both formal and informal, to update them on the educational and social progress of their child
- working closely with external agencies to ensure that we give access to the fullest range of support available
- continuing to have high expectations for all young people and their families regardless of their background
- ensuring that we use the most relevant research and best practice guidance available.

Equality objective 3:

We will promote cultural understanding between different ethnic groups within our school community. We will achieve this by using a range of approaches such as:

- Citizenship curriculum: Discussing the Equality Act 2010 and protected characteristics
- Thought for the Week: Celebrating cultural festivals such as Jewish New Year.
- Thought for the Week: Looking at the successes of different ethnic groups, for example, Black History Month.
- Holocaust education: Year 8 history unit (summer term).
- Staff CPD linked to tackling racism, prejudice and discrimination.
- I-future curriculum: Unit on refugees and asylum seekers (Year 9).
- History curriculum (Year 8): The contribution of Commonwealth soldiers to WW1 and WW2

The Curriculum

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflects the principles set out above.

Ethos and organisation

We ensure the principles listed apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with progress, attainment and achievement:

- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

We operate a relationship charter/behaviour policy, which enshrines equal rights and responsibility for all users of our building.

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. The PCLC schools' anti-bullying policies give clear guidance on the Trust's position on dealing with bullying incidents.

We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and, if requested, under the guidance set out in the Freedom of Information Policy, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our schools and how they are dealt with.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

The Principal/Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy, for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and also to take appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- act as a role model for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole school community
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the eight principles set out in this policy
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Pupils will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other pupil or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to the head of house or to another member of staff.
- Abide by all the school's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and trustees / local governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

All staff and trustees / local governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail, such as the Accessibility Plan and Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy.

Religious observance

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

Staff development and training

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.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Principal/Headteacher and Trust Board.

Publishing information

PCLC will publish information on its website to promote inclusion and support those within the school community with protected characteristics. This will include:-

- Details about our curriculum
- Clubs and activities
- Gender Pay Gap Report
- Policies such as Anti-bullying, Equality and Diversity in Employment, Inclusion and SEND policy, and Accessibility Plans.

The Trust will not provide this information if:

- The employee is employed under contract personally to do work.
- The employer does not have, and it is not reasonably practicable for the employer to obtain the data.

In addition to pupils with protected characteristics, we gather further information on the following groups of pupils:

- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Disadvantaged group
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Young carers
- Looked after children
- Other vulnerable groups

Monitoring and review

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data, such as employee questionnaires and analysis of employment patterns, relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

See also:

Admissions policy

Complaints policy

Pay policy

Recruitment policy

Relationship Charter/Behaviour Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy

Data Protection Policy

Whistle-blowing Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually.