

CALDEW SCHOOL



*Policy legally required
Reviewed under Full Governors Committee
On school website
Reviewed annually
Date adopted: September 2024
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NOTE: Caldew School is an Academy and where reference is made to school(s) this should be taken to refer to 'academy' in so far as the reference specifically applies to Caldew School.

EQUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

EQUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

At Caldew School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff and parents/carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life.

We have taken an organisational approach and have ensured that all equality strands are woven into the everyday working of the school, particularly in relation to formulating policy and practice around both delivery of our service and employment but also in relation to other functions such as setting budgets, making public appointments and funding.

The Single Equality Scheme describes how the Governing Body of Caldew School intends to fulfil its responsibilities under the Equalities Act to all stakeholders. The Equalities Action Plan will be part of the School Improvement Plan and information will be published on the school website. This is underpinned by a commitment to promoting positive relationships and understanding between all groups within our school community.

This document sets out our commitment to be fully inclusive to all stakeholders and how those with the following protected characteristics (previously known as equality strands) will be protected in our school from harassment and discrimination:

- Disability
- Gender
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Age
- Being married or in a civil partnership

This Scheme extends, however, to cover all aspects of vulnerability, including those associated with socio-economic factors (eg students from low income families), Children Looked After and those with Child Protection Plans. This scheme also links with other statutory policies and guidance we are legally required to have in place.

The Single Equality Scheme will be reviewed every four years and will be reported on annually.

Single Equality Scheme

Aims of the Single Equality Scheme

- To articulate the school's commitment to equality which permeates all school policies and practices;
- To ensure that everyone who belongs to, or comes into contact with, our school community is valued and respected;
- To promote equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- To comply with statutory duties under equalities legislation in one document

Purpose of the Equality Scheme

This Equality Scheme is our school's response to the specific and general duties in the current equality legislation, which has been brought together under the Equality Act 2010. It is an attempt to capture how we are systematically establishing and implementing good practice in equality and diversity. This Equality Scheme sets out how we will:

- Develop and review the Scheme and Action Plan;
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Take proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular group of students.

Planning to Eliminate Discrimination and Promote Equality of Opportunity

This Scheme is underpinned by the core belief that all children and young people belong to their local community and share the same rights to membership of that community and a quality education. An action plan linked to our objectives accompanies this Equality Scheme which identifies what we will be doing over the coming year and beyond to make our school more accessible to the whole community, irrespective of background or need.

It encompasses our duties to promote positive outcomes in relation to race, gender and disability. It encompasses our anticipatory duties to plan ahead for the reasonable adjustments (reasonable and proportionate steps to overcome barriers that may impede some students) that we need to make to be best placed to help disabled students who come or may come to our school.

The scheme may include some of the existing actions set out in the school's Accessibility Plan required under the planning duties in the Disability Discrimination Act, as it sets out how we will increase access to education for disabled students, alongside other protected groups, in the three areas required:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services;
- Improving the delivery to disabled students of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

The School Improvement Plan will contain action points relating to the equalities scheme and progress towards the equality objectives within it is reported on regularly to the relevant Committees. This scheme is understood and implemented by all staff and is available on the school website.

Roles and Responsibilities for Implementing the Single Equality Scheme

The Governing Body will ensure that appropriate members:

- Ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation;
- Receive up-to-date training in all equalities duties;
- Draw up, publish and implement the school's equality objectives;
- Establish that the action plans arising from the Scheme are part of the School Improvement Plan;
- Support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary;
- Ensure that all stakeholders with protected characteristics are protected in our school from harassment and discrimination;
- Evaluate and review the Scheme every four years;
- Evaluate the objectives and action points yearly.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that staff and parents are informed about the Single Equality Scheme;
- Ensure that staff understand the broad legal definition of disability;
- Ensure that the Scheme is implemented effectively;
- Manage any day-to-day issues arising from the Scheme whether for students, for the school as an employer or for the local community;
- Ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the Scheme;
- Monitor the Scheme and report to the Resources Committee at least annually, on the effectiveness of the Scheme, objectives and action points;
- Ensure that the Leadership and Management Teams are kept up to date with any development affecting the Scheme/action points arising from the Scheme;
- Oversee the provision of appropriate support and monitoring for all students and specific and targeted students to whom the Scheme has direct relevance
- Ensure that all delegated recruitment panels give due regard to this plan, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities;
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promote respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life;
- Treat all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness;
- Report any incidents of racism in accordance with the Equality Act and LA guidance;
- Deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and according to LA and national guidelines and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken;
- In the event of expectations not being met, ensure action is taken in accordance with the status of those involved e.g. student, member of staff, volunteer etc.

All Staff will:

- Accept that this is a whole school priority and support the Single Equality Scheme;
- Be aware of the Single Equality Scheme and how it relates to them;
- Keep themselves up-to-date with relevant legislation and attend training and information events organised by the school;
- Ensure that all stakeholders are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Scheme and its Equality Objectives;
- Strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images;
- Promote equality and diversity through teaching and through relations with students, staff, parents, and the wider community;
- Know how to deal with incidents of concern, and how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Know procedures for reporting incidents of racism, harassment or other forms of discrimination.

Students will:

- Understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability;
- Be expected to act in accordance with any relevant part of the Scheme;
- Experience a curriculum and environment which is respectful of diversity and difference and prepares them well for life in a diverse society;
- Understand the importance of reporting discriminatory bullying and racially motivated incidents;

- Ensure that any peer mentoring programme within the school promotes understanding and supports students who are experiencing discrimination.

Links to Other Policies

Caldew School's Single Equality Scheme has direct links with other statutory policies and procedures which we are required to have in place. Namely:

- Admissions
- Student Behaviour Policy
- Student Needs Policy
- Student Welfare Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Recruitment Procedures
- E-safety Policy/Acceptable Use
- Educational Trips and Visits Policy

Schools Aims Statements

Staffing and Employment

Caldew School complies fully with legislation which protects our staff and other adults working in our academy, from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. To do this we will ensure that our staff are trained to help them understand their equality duties and/or the differing needs of protected groups within our academy community and have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development;

- 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;
- Monitor recruitment and retention;
- Invest in continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society;
- 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 unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work – for example ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capability to carry out the duties;
- 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.

Students' Attainment and Progress

Staff have high expectations of all students and continually challenge them to reach higher standards.

We recognise and value all forms of achievement. We will monitor and analyse student performance by ethnicity, gender, disability and special educational need and social background. Any differences which are identified will be addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.

Curriculum Development and Delivery

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

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Encourage students to become independent and assist them in taking responsibility for the management of their own learning and behaviour;
- Take account of the achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the academy, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Promote activities that celebrate our common experience as well as those that recognise diversity generally and foster understanding and respect for the culture and faith of all our students and their families;
- Seek to involve all parents and carers in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes,

expectations and their impact on learning;

Student Welfare and Pastoral Care

We aim to promote the health, safety and welfare of all children and staff providing a caring and supportive pastoral system that takes account of their needs. To do this we will:

- Ensure that details of this Scheme are shared with all staff both teaching, non-teaching and ancillary staff;
- Expect all staff and volunteers working in the academy to foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among boys and girls from all ethnic groups and range of abilities;
- Challenge stereotypes and foster students' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities;
- Take account of religious, cultural and ethnic differences, special educational needs, disability and the experiences and needs of all students, throughout our pastoral support;
- Provide appropriate support for students learning English as an additional language and encourage students to use their home and community languages to enhance their learning;
- Give appropriate support (using external agencies where required) to victims of harassment and bullying. The perpetrators are dealt with in line with the Behaviour Policy and are provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour;
- Ensure that guidance and support for students is delivered in a way that does not discriminate against students with the unseen (visual, hearing, mobility, cognitive and prone to seizure) impairments;
- Ensure that appropriate and discreet facilities are available for those students who require personal or intimate care in order to protect their dignity and foster respect for their individual needs;
- Ensure that staff are empowered to raise any concerns relating to their health, safety and welfare by promoting well-being strategies among staff as a whole and in their respective groups.

The Quality of Provision – Curriculum and Other Activities

We aim to provide an appropriate curriculum for students of all backgrounds. To do this we will:

- Monitor and evaluate its effectiveness through target setting and attainment analysis;
- Ensure that all students participate in the mainstream curriculum of the school;
- Develop and continuously monitor a curriculum which builds on students' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:
 - boys and girls
 - students learning English as an additional language
 - students from minority ethnic groups, including Gypsies and Travellers
 - students who are gifted and talented
 - students with special educational needs
 - students with a disability
 - students who are looked after by the Local Authority
 - students who are at a risk of disaffection and exclusion
 - lesbian, gay or questioning young people
 - students who are the subject of child protection plans
- Ensure that each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students;
- Deliver a curriculum which reflects and values diversity. It encourages students to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes;
- Ensure extra-curricular activities and special events e.g. academy performances, cater for the interests and capabilities of all students and take account of parental preferences related to religion and culture;
- Ensure educational visits and excursions take account of the capabilities of all students including both physical and cognitive disabilities and cultural differences;

Behaviour and Attendance

We expect high standards of behaviour from all students, all staff and others who are working or connected with the school. Details of these expected standards are set out in the Behaviour Policy.

In order to ensure that the schools Behaviour Policy and associated policies are equitable, we:

- Have procedures for disciplining students and managing behaviour that are fair and applied equally to all. All staff are expected to operate consistent systems of rewards and sanctions;
- Recognise that cultural background and disability may affect behaviour. Our school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour;

- Recognise that hate incidents or prejudice-based bullying behaviour is 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 or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour;
- Have clear procedures in place so that all forms of bullying and harassment, including racism and harassment related to disability, sexism and homophobia, are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently and are in line with relevant Cumbria LA policies such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents. All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies;
- Ensure that all staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice and are offered support in handling such matters;
- Encourage staff to explore their own views and attitudes to difference and to monitor their practice in relation to this Scheme. Adults take care to lead through example, demonstrating high expectations of all students;
- Will take steps to ensure that students, staff and parents are aware of policies and procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group, is always unacceptable;
- Provide information and advice on attendance and exclusion to parents/carers in accessible formats such as relevant community languages and large print;
- Have strategies in place to reintegrate long-term non-attenders and excluded students, which address the needs of all students;
- Ensure that families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to student attendance and absence and that cases are always followed up in a way that takes account of cultural issues or matters relating to a child's disability;
- Make provision for leave of absence for religious observance, for staff as well as students;
- Monitor attendance by gender, ethnicity and special educational need. Action is taken in order to address any disparities between different groups of students;
- Fully support children with long-term medical needs who may have an erratic attendance because they are in and out of hospital or not well enough to attend academy on a regular basis;

Partnership with Students, Parents, Carers and the Wider Community

Caldew School has established good links with our local and wider community. To do this we will:

- Involve stakeholders including students, staff, parents/carers and other users of the academy in relation to all equalities duties;
- Take into account the preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting e.g. translated materials or interpretation facilities for disabled people or those for whom English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this Country;
- Include representation from the widest range of relevant groups that we can reasonably achieve;
- Monitor parental involvement and have strategies to raise participation of under-represented groups. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all;
- Progress reports to parents/carers are clearly written and free from jargon to encourage parents to participate in their child's education. Where necessary, information is available in languages and formats other than English. Parents with a disability or with learning difficulties will be able to access the schools information;
- Parents are fully involved in the schools response for their child with special educational needs, understand the purpose of any intervention or programme of action and are told about the parent partnership service when SEN is identified;
- Encourage participation of under-represented groups in areas of employment e.g. through work experience placements;
- Ensure that any informal events which we may hold are designed to include the whole community
- Work in partnership with parents and the community to address specific incidents and to develop positive attitudes to difference;
- Ensure that the school's premises, grounds and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

Leadership and Management

Caldew School has a clear admissions policy and procedures which are in line with those issued by Cumbria LA. Our aim is to ensure that our admission process is fair and equitable to all students. We will also ensure that our employment practices reflect equality and diversity. To do this we will:

- Not discriminate against a disabled student in the arrangements we make for determining admission;
- Consider students with special educational needs and use a period of time to consider whether we can accommodate them. Students with statements of special educational needs will always be admitted unless, through the statutory assessment process, it is demonstrated that the student's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children;
- Gather comprehensive information about students' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. either via the admissions form or at the admissions interview;
- Adhere to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equitable and in line with statutory duties of the Governing Body;
- Will take steps to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the academy and ensure recruitment and selection processes are monitored;
- Ensure that staff training continually highlights equality issues. Equality is incorporated into the induction programme for new staff;
- Recognise and value the skills of all staff, including non-teaching and part-time staff. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.
- Ensure that staff handbooks and regular professional development activities are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy;
- Ensure that resources and displays in our academy reflect the experience and backgrounds of students, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the academy

Linguistic Diversity

We recognise and celebrate the linguistic diversity in British society. We look for opportunities to enrich the curricular experience of all our students by:

- Highlighting how English has borrowed from other languages;
- Raising awareness of the similarities and differences between English and other languages;
- Reflecting the multilingual nature of wider society in our resources and displays;
- Acknowledging the differences in syntax with non-spoken forms of English e.g. British Sign Language.

Gender Equality

Caldew School is committed to combating sex discrimination and sexism and promoting the equality of women and men. We welcome the requirements of the Gender Equality duty and this section sets out our commitment to meeting the duty. We will give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex, including domestic violence, sexual violence, bullying and exploitation;
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men in all of our functions;
- Recognise that society has stereotypes for both women and men, and both women and men can lose opportunities because of these stereotypes;
- Be aware that staff with caring and domestic responsibilities may need to work part-time or flexible working hours;
- Work in partnership with other agencies to eliminate sexual harassment, domestic violence and other hate crimes;
- Ensure the rights, under the Gender Recognition Act 2003, of transgender people (who have Gender Recognition Certificates).

Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors. Exclusions will always be based on the schools Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and action taken to eliminate these. In addition, we will:

- Monitor exclusions by gender, ethnicity and special educational need. Background is also considered.
- Action is taken in order to address any disparities between different groups of students; take all reasonable steps to prevent the exclusion of a student for a reason related to any disability they may have

Equality Duties

Racial Equality Duty and Community Cohesion

Caldew School recognises that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people experience discrimination on the basis of colour, race, nationality, religion and ethnic origin. Racial harassment and violence is one of the most serious consequences of racism, damaging people emotionally and physically and limiting life choices and opportunities. The school will take all necessary measures to prevent and respond to racial harassment and assist BAME people to live in freedom from harassment and to feel safe as they enjoy and achieve throughout their education. In order to comply with this duty, we will:

- Keep accurate records of all ethnic and faith groups, their backgrounds and needs and how we respond to them;
- Prevent racial discrimination, and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups;
- Encourage students and their families of all ethnic groups to participate fully in all aspects of school life;
- Counter myths and misinformation that may undermine good community relations;
- Strive to ensure the school staff and other adults working within the school, students and their families as well as our partners and the wider community fully understand the principles of good race relations.

Gender Equality Duties

In accordance with our Single Equality Scheme, we welcome the requirements of the Gender Equality duty and this section sets out our commitment to meeting the duty. We will give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex, including domestic violence, sexual violence, bullying and exploitation;
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men in all of our functions.

Religion and Belief Equality Duties

Caldew School recognises that people can face discrimination because of attitudes in society towards the faith communities to which they belong. The school also recognises that a person's religious (or similar) beliefs may mean that they have different needs, demands and expectations, which require flexibility.

The school is committed to eliminating illegal discrimination and exclusion on the basis of religion or belief. Our school recognises the need to consider the duties which require us to assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures have on promoting equality for people based on their religion, belief or non-belief.

Sexual Orientation Equality Duties

Caldew School is committed to combatting discrimination faced by lesbians, gay men, bisexual people and transgender (LGBT). We aim to ensure equality of opportunity for LGBT people across services and employment. We will respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation, respond to homophobia, challenge stereotyping and improve knowledge about LGBT communities, both internally and to the community as a whole. Our school recognises the need to protect students from unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation as required by the Equality Act 2010. We are committed to taking a proactive approach to preventing all forms of homophobia within the school and will assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process. We will deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and according to LA and national guidelines and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken.

Pregnancy and Maternity Equality Duties

Caldew School recognise that the Equality Act 2010 now specifically includes the need to protect female students who are pregnant or who have recently given birth from discriminatory practices. This school will ensure that no student will be excluded purely on grounds of pregnancy and that up to 18 calendar weeks authorised absence period immediately before and after the birth may be given in order to ensure that the student is reintegrated into education as quickly as possible. Female staff are already covered under existing employment legislation. Such a student is protected from discrimination because:

- She is or has been pregnant;
- She has given birth and unfavourable treatment occurs within a period of 26 weeks beginning on the day she gave birth;
- She is breastfeeding and unfavourable treatment occurs within the period of 26 weeks beginning on the day she gave birth;

- A female student is protected even when the baby is stillborn, so long as she was pregnant for at least 24 weeks before she gave birth;
- Both direct and indirect discrimination related to pregnancy and maternity relate to the person being disadvantaged and treated unfavourably.

Publication of the Single Equality Scheme

Caldew School Single Equality Scheme is published on our website.

Complaints

If a member of the public feels that they have suffered harassment or have been treated unfairly by the School because of their sex, colour, race, nationality, ethnic group, regional or national origin, age, marital status, disability, political or religious belief, sexual orientation or class they should report this without fail through the School's Complaints Procedure. Complaints by staff will be dealt with under the Grievance Procedure, as appropriate. We take all external and internal complaints seriously and will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviours. Complaints about staff will be investigated using the appropriate procedures. We will monitor all complaints to establish whether we are meeting our equality duties.

