

Walkergate Community School Published Equalities Objectives 2020-2024

This is our published information about our school and the ways in which we work to eliminate differences of outcome for groups with protected characteristics. We include information about the work we do to promote equality and challenge discrimination.

Context:

Walkergate Community School is a larger than average sized primary school in the east of Newcastle. Pupils range in age from 2 to 11. We have 3 core values which we promote and celebrate. They are: Responsibility, Respect and Resilience

The school is one of six schools within NEAT Multi Academy Trust. Each school in the trust is encouraged to have its own ethos and character but to work collectively as one trust to achieve our shared common purpose, vision and strategic aims. Our shared values are the behaviours that will help us to do this.

Our common purpose as a trust is to **nurture, educate, achieve and transform together.**

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 and NEAT websites outline our ambitions for the children, our vision for learning.

The school's own curriculum is responsive and underpins learning about values, about respect for one another and the wider communities to which children belong. We celebrate and aim to uncover the unique talents and characteristics of each child. Our school promotes and teaches the children to understand community values.

13 community languages in addition to English are spoken by children at the school. 5.2% of our pupils currently speak English as an Additional Language which is lower than the national primary school average of 21%¹ The number of pupils from BAME backgrounds is significantly lower than the national average of 33.5%². The school is situated in a ward in quintile 5 (most deprived of all wards). Unemployment locally is 15.6%. Pupils experience increasing levels of mobility

¹ *DfESchools. pupils and their characteristics, January 2019*

²SFR template National Statistics 240815

Our disadvantaged pupils in respect of whom we receive the Pupil Premium Grant are reported on as a discrete group in order to demonstrate the effect of the funding on diminishing the differences in outcomes for these pupils compared with their peers. The number of pupils eligible for this funding is well above the national average. We use the funding effectively to offer academic support and guidance using evidence-based approaches. The funding is also used to provide staffing, clothes, interventions, clubs, nurture and life experiences. The majority of the pupils on behalf of whom we currently receive the grant are making expected levels of progress.

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.

We represent, discuss and welcome family diversity and the positive aspects of individuality in families. We discuss any perceptions of aspects of diversity that may be uncomfortable for members of the school 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. Staff are trained, and school has embraced the No Outsiders project, and will continue to develop and extend the work we do to bring the principles of equalities legislation to life for our pupils.

Staff work supportively with pupils about gender, gender identity or sexual orientation and we challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender equality.

We want all of our pupils to succeed and achieve their full potential, academically, physically and socially in an atmosphere where they can grow and acquire appropriate skills, values and attitudes.

Our uniform is flexible and the guidance does not discriminate against any child on the basis of 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 on the SEND register. The SEND local offer and SEND report are accessible from the school website.

Many pupils join the school with significant communication delay. We address this

through individualised intervention plans and the support of parents and carers. This is one of the most significant equality challenges we face. We work hard to try to diminish this deficit during a child's time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We are also participating in the [Oracy 21](#) project.

The main school is an accessible building for people with physical disabilities, with ramps, an accessible toilet and wheelchair accessible routes and evac chairs. There are lifts. The older building used by EYFS is one which is adapted as we need to.

The school's accessibility plan explains in more detail the ways in which we are working to improve access to the environment, curriculum and information for pupils with disabilities. These include trauma-informed approaches, autism-friendly strategies and ACEs training for all staff.

We record and report instances of discriminatory language or bullying on our CPOMS system. The school is a restorative school, which means that we aim to resolve conflict and prevent harm.

All staff recognise the relationship between hate speech and radicalisation or extremism. We welcome open discussion and debate with the children in order to dispel myths and misconceptions, and do this during circle time.

We recognise that some pupils may have limited opportunities to experience the wider UK and other contexts outside Walker and prioritise a programme of learning including planned visits and visitors to broaden understanding of the plural, multicultural, multi-faith context of modern life. Pupils visit a local church and we make use of metro passes to travel and enjoy learning about our local environment.

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. Kitchen staff make dietary adjustments adapted to religious belief, and we comply with parental requests to remove children from, for example, learning about Christmas if it is requested.

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. Children learn democratic principles and process through our own elections.

Responsibilities

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

All staff take responsibility for anti-bullying good practice.

Staffing

There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff, both teaching and administrative.

Behaviour and attitudes

There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents. Trauma informed approaches underpin our work in supporting and transforming expectations and attitudes about emotions and behaviour. All staff will attend training about Adverse Childhood Experiences, mindfulness and mental health.

When appropriate, we can engage with Northumbria Police's Community Engagement Team to demonstrate our integrity in supporting those with protected characteristics from vulnerability to hate crime and extremism.

School council members are advocates for their peers, and we know from our meetings that the majority of pupils feel safe from all kinds of bullying.

The school's behaviour policy is available from the [website](#).

Curriculum

There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion and mutual understanding. Staff have introduced the [No Outsiders](#) project in school, and there is a commitment to embedding this work.

There are activities across the curriculum, including PSHE and assembly to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to help them to share our values and develop the concept of global citizenship and responsibility within a community.

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. Participation and engagement work with families, such as coffee mornings and end of topic celebration events.

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

We consult parents and carers through questionnaires, Twitter and Facebook and the school website. We are able to respond quickly to any concern about perceived inequality, unlawful discrimination or harassment.

Part Two: Objectives Fostering Good Relations

Objective 1: Characteristic: Disability Vulnerable Learners

The school will promote resilience, positive approaches to mental health and early diagnosis and prompt interventions for any pupils whose health may be a barrier to full attendance or to achieving the education they need to be ready for the next stage in their learning.

Specific

'Vulnerable learners' may be characterised by some or all of the following:

- Poor attendance, low engagement when in school, challenging behaviour, low self-esteem, high levels of mobility between school placements, undiagnosed SEMH needs (pupils with severe difficulties in managing their emotions and behaviour).
- They often show inappropriate responses and feelings to situations), Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and other aspects of neurodiversity (ASD, sensory, dyslexia, for example).

The complex combination of these vulnerabilities means that school has a great deal of additional work to do with many of our pupils in order for them to access the high quality teaching, cultural learning opportunities and opportunities for personal development that we have to offer them.

Work has been ongoing across the Trust to develop innovative, robust solutions and mechanisms to help professionals see at-a-glance the 'windscreen' of interventions, partners, resources and support that is available to work through and support many of the issues that are barriers to learning and emotional resilience. Our school has a counsellor and Newcastle upon Tyne has a mental Health Champions programme.

There is a great deal of work being done to address communication in Newcastle schools, and this will be a key aspect of how we address this aspect of equality. The school, in collaboration with Benfield will participate in Oracy 21 with a view to developing verbal communication skills.

A review of SEND and access to services such as Speech and Language development should result in a more local offer for families in the east of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Measurable

This area would be the place to elaborate on the specific and measurable targets we touched on briefly with regard to:

- ACES and new ways of working being developed
- Better access to speech and language provision in the east, meaning that more families feel it is accessible and attend appointments
- Speech and Language Provision. Oracy 21
- Summer provision for children experiencing disadvantage; Best Summer Ever creating memorable experiences to 'even out' the experiences children can write and talk about when they return to school after the summer holiday
- Mobilising resources for vulnerable children
- A growing picture of resources and a graduated response to SEND via the windscreen approach being pioneered and developed in the Trust with a particular focus on social and emotional health and wellbeing


Objective 2: Characteristics: sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, disadvantage.

Community context Or shall we call this Local knowledge and insight?

Specific

Staff in every school within the Trust need access to regular, specific and accurate facts and contextual information about the communities from which our pupils are drawn. Accurate contextual information helps us to understand the challenges and opportunities we need to address.

It would be very helpful to also develop local knowledge and insight and place based systems in Walker, where it is less well developed.



A key objective for the next 4 years is for the NEAT Trust to continue to research, develop and articulate accurate and informative contextual information to inform all of the strategies and partnerships we use to challenge inequality; the majority of the inequalities faced by our pupils do not occur on the school site, but if we fail to address them, we limit the impact we can have on children's happiness, life chances and social mobility.

Measurable

Developing the contacts and the tools that help us to better understand and work as a valued partner with our wider community.

- Staff induction will include training about protected characteristics in the context of the school and the wider Trust area
- A social mobility strategy for children and young people in the NEAT Trust will be articulated by defining contextual insight that we need to actively work to understand and collaborate to address.
- Best practice guides will be developed and used to address inclusion, for example: working with refugee and asylum seeker families
- Community intelligence is promptly shared with partners
- Useful pathways and interventions are added to the windscreen model and good practice in tailoring the right intervention at the right time is enhanced and continuously improved.

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

Progress against the objectives will be reviewed annually, and they will remain our objectives until April 2024, when they are due to be refreshed