NEWBARNS PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

EQUALITY POLICY, OBJECTIVES & ACTION PLAN 2026 – 2028

Approved by:			
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Signed:			
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[1]The Governing Body/Academy Trust are free to delegate approval of this document to a Committee of the Governing Body, an individual Governor or the Head Teacher.
[2]Policy should be reviewed annually with objectives reviewed and republished every 4 years.

REVIEW SHEET

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision/Reviewed
1	Original	Sept 2023
2	Minor updates to include information on sexual and other forms of harassment and minor formatting	Nov 2024
3	Minor additions and updates to terminology. Updated to include links to DfE guidance on gender questioning and social transition and preventing and tacking the bullying and harassment of school staff	Sept 2026

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Referenced statutory and non-statutory guidance

PSED checklist for school staff and governors
PSED guidelines for writing equality objectives
PSED template for publication of the school equality objectives
PSED equality objectives action plan
PSED statement for the staff handbook
PSED statement for school website
PSED Annual Equality Report Example Template (large school)
Equality Impact Assessments Guidance
The Equality Act and legislation relating to safeguarding requirements (including gender questioning children and social transition

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1. Introduction

Our school is inclusive; we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and we are committed to ensuring all members of our community are equally valued.

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. In Cumbria we know that some groups do less well than others 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.

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

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.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement.

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.

Our approach to equality is based on 7 key principles:

1. **All learners are 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 and whatever their sexual orientation.
2. **We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation or pregnancy and maternity (protected characteristics). We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach, support children and visit here.
3. **We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other. We are also committed to supporting our staff in the practical implementation of this Policy.
4. **We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
5. **We observe good equality practices for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
6. **We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
7. **We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

2. The Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils, staff or the wider school community or treat them less favourably because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy and maternity. We will not separate pupils by reference to protected characteristics such as sex, race or faith while at school. This would be considered to be direct discrimination.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also "protected characteristics" and although are not part of the school provisions related to pupils, would apply to staff and the wider school community.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and two specific duties:

The Public Sector Equality Duty or "general duty". This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups;
- foster good relations between different groups.

Two "specific duties". This requires all public organisations, including schools, to:

1. publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty;
2. publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

Further information on how the Equality Act applies to schools can be found in the Department for Education document Equality Act 2010: advice for schools.

3. Purpose of this Equality Policy

To comply with our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 our Equality Policy describes how we are trying to systematically set and implement good practice in equality and diversity as follows:

- Develop and review the Equality Policy and our objectives with appropriate timescales for the future.
- Eliminate discrimination.
- Promote positive attitudes and eliminate harassment or victimisation related to any aspect of social identity or diversity.
- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Encourage participation by people with disabilities and people representing different aspects of social identity in public life.
- Take steps to take account of difference even where that involves treating some people more favourably than others.
- Take proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils, employees, or other members of the school community like pupils' parents or carers.

4. Links to other policies and documentation

Although this Policy is the key document for information about our approach to equality in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, evidence of our commitment to our responsibilities under the Equality Act can also be found in our:

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions procedures
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality impact assessment procedures
- Equality training materials
- Governing body minutes
- Parent and pupil surveys

- Child Protection Policy and procedures
- Code of conduct for staff and other adults
- School performance data
- School prospectus (where available)
- School website and newsletters
- Self-evaluation reviews
- SEND Policy
- School development plans

As a school we also collect the following information, broken down by race, religion or belief, sex, disability and, where relevant, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, and age:

- School admissions
- Pupil attainment and progress
- Prejudice-related incidents
- Sanctions (including suspension and exclusion)
- Staff recruitment and selection
- Promotions
- Professional development opportunities

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the ways in which we comply with this are found in our Recruitment and Selection procedures.

5. Our school profile

Newbarns Primary and Nursery School is a large mixed primary academy for children aged 3–11, located in the Newbarns area of Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. The school became part of the South Cumbria Multi-Academy Trust in October 2023. It serves the local community and has a strong reputation for inclusive practice and high-quality pastoral care. Following its most recent inspection in April 2025, Ofsted judged the school to be **Good** in all inspected areas under the current inspection framework.

5.1 Catchment area

The school primarily serves families living in the Newbarns and Hawcoat areas of Barrow-in-Furness. Admissions are largely based on proximity to the school, with the majority of pupils living within approximately **0.6 miles** of the site. Catchment boundaries are determined annually by the local authority and can vary depending on applications.

5.2 Pupil numbers

- **Number on roll: 439 pupils** (2025)
- **Age range:** 3–11 years
- **School capacity:** 459 pupils
- **Gender:** Mixed

5.3 Gender profile

The school has an almost equal gender balance boys (50.3%) and girls (49.7%)

Figures are based on a roll of 439 pupils and rounded to the nearest whole pupil.

5.4 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The school has a relatively high proportion of pupils with identified SEND.

SEND Category	Percentage	Approximate number
SEN Support	16.4%	72 pupils
Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	7.7%	34 pupils

This equates to approximately **106 pupils (24.1%)** identified with SEND, although pupils with EHCPs are included within the overall SEND population and should not simply be added separately for statutory reporting.

5.5 Ethnicity

The pupil population is predominantly White British.

Ethnicity	Percentage
White British	92–93%
African	1.8–2.3%
White and Asian	0.7–1.1%
Mixed and other ethnic groups	Approximately 3–4%

Overall, around **7–8%** of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds.

5.6 English as an Additional Language (EAL)

- **Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL): 2.1%**
- **Approximate number of pupils: 9**

This is considerably lower than the national average, indicating that the vast majority of pupils speak English as their first language.

5.7 Pupil Characteristics

Free School Meals (FSM)

As of the January 2025 School Census, **51 pupils** at Newbarns Primary and Nursery School are eligible for Free School Meals, representing **11.7%** of the school population. This is below the national average for primary schools, although the school receives Pupil Premium funding to support eligible pupils.

Disadvantaged Pupils

Pupil Premium funding is received for approximately 49–51 pupils eligible through current or recent Free School Meal entitlement. Around **11–12% of pupils** are currently identified as disadvantaged through FSM eligibility, although the school's overall disadvantaged cohort may be slightly higher when children who have been eligible for FSM in the previous six years. Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are included.

Entry to School

Newbarns Primary and Nursery School has its own maintained nursery provision, and many children transition into Reception from the school's nursery. Others join Reception from a range of local private and voluntary nurseries, childminders or directly from home. The school has well-established transition arrangements with all early years providers to ensure children settle quickly and make a positive start to school.

Note: If we do not provide actual figures in relation to pupils or staff from ethnic minorities or any other equality group with protected characteristics it is because they are a small number of people and we must maintain their privacy.

6. Planning to eliminate discrimination and promote equality

Our Equality Objectives Action Plan 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. We prepare this plan through consultation with key stakeholders including pupils, parents & carers, governors, staff, and others in the school community.

In order for us to assess and make reasonable adjustments and proportionate steps to overcome barriers that may impede some people, we also have an Accessibility Plan (published on the school website) which specifically focuses on how we will improve equality of access to:

- education for pupils with disabilities;
- work for employees with disabilities;
- work or a family life for visitors and other members of our school community;
- other user groups who access our building.

We publish them together because they overlap and we want to make sure we are meeting our duties to promote positive outcomes in relation to disability, and actions to address other social identities.

Progress towards our Equality Objectives and the Accessibility Plan is reported on regularly to the Governing Body and reviewed annually.

We take steps to ensure our Equality Information Report and our Objectives are understood and implemented by all staff and are published on the school website. They will be made available in different formats and in different languages on request to the school office.

In line with DfE guidance on what we must or should publish on the school website, we will consider collecting and publishing governing board members' diversity data so that such information is widely accessible to members of the school community and the public.

7. Advancing equality of opportunity between different groups

7.1 Disability equality

Our commitment to achieving equality of opportunity for pupils with disabilities or other medical needs, their families, school staff, and other school users has a number of objectives:

We will promote equality for people with disabilities or other medical needs by:

- removing barriers to the accessibility of education, employment, services, information and buildings;
- encouraging good practice by our partners by giving relevant advice or instructions;
- ensuring we take their needs into account when procuring goods and services from our providers;
- promoting positive images of people with disabilities;
- challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes;
- making the environment as safe as possible for and challenging (both on and off-line) antisocial or bullying behaviour against, or harassment of pupils, staff or other school users with disabilities or other medical needs.

We plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils by:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- increasing the inclusion of positive images of disabled people across the curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils, to the standard of which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled;

We welcome the requirements of the disability equality duty and this section sets out our commitment to meeting the duty. Our Policy shows how we promote disability equality across all areas of the school, to disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and other school users.

7.2 Racial equality and community cohesion

We recognise that people of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) origin experience discrimination based on colour, race, nationality, religion, and ethnic origin. Racial harassment and violence are the most serious consequences of racism, damaging people emotionally and physically and limiting life choices and opportunities.

To ensure this school takes all necessary steps to prevent and tackle racial harassment and to help people of BAME origin live free from harassment, feel safe and enjoy and achieve throughout their education or working life at our school, we will take steps to:

- keep accurate records of all groups of faith or ethnicity, their backgrounds and needs and how we respond to them;
- encourage dialogue between different racial groups on the suitability of our educational provision;
- prevent racial discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups;
- encourage pupils and their families of all ethnic groups to participate fully in all aspects of school life;
- use our support for the voluntary and community sector to promote good race relations;
- counter myths and misinformation that may undermine good community relations;
- ensure our staff and other adults working in our school, pupils and their families, as well as our partners and the wider community fully understand the principles of good race relations.

7.3 Sex and gender reassignment equality

We are committed to combating sex discrimination and sexism and promoting the equality of women, men, boys and girls.

We are also committed to ensuring the rights under the Equality Act of people undergoing gender reassignment (defined as applying to anyone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process or part-process, for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes). This means that in order to be protected under the Act, pupils or staff will not necessarily have to be undertaking a medical procedure to change their sex but must be taking steps to live in the opposite gender or proposing to do so. So far, the law has not acknowledged non-binary or genderless individuals, but we want to act appropriately to safeguard and include all members of our communities.

We will give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment (in all its forms) and victimisation on the grounds of sex or gender reassignment, including domestic abuse, sexual violence, bullying, and exploitation (both on and off-line);
- promote equality of opportunity between women and men in all our functions;

7.4 Religion and belief equality

This school recognises that people can face discrimination because of attitudes in society towards the religion, faith, or belief they hold or faith community they belong to. Faith-based hate crime has a character that is distinct from race-based hate crime. We also recognise that a person's religious (or similar) beliefs may mean that they have different needs, demands and expectations, which require flexibility. We understand this means we must assess the impact that our policies, functions and procedures have on promoting equality for people based on their religion, belief or non-belief.

(**Note:** There are exemptions under equality law e.g. the content of the curriculum but not the delivery of it; for schools with a religious character (faith schools) in admissions; freedom to provide collective acts of worship for one religion and not another; or to include all pupils regardless of faith in

learning about a religious celebration without unlawfully discriminating. Check you are applying them properly using DfE Guidance: 'The Equality Act and Schools').

7.5 Sexual orientation equality

This school is committed to combatting unlawful discrimination, bullying and harassment (in all its forms) and victimisation faced by people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender questioning or undergoing social transition and we aim to ensure equality of opportunity in education, services, and employment. We will take account of information included in KCSiE and additional legislation relating to safeguarding requirements for children.

We will respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation, tackle homophobia, challenge stereotyping and improve knowledge about LGBTQ communities, both inside the community and across wider society.

We are committed to taking a proactive approach to preventing all forms of homophobia in the school community and will assess the impact of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process.

7.6 Pregnancy and maternity equality

This school is committed to ensuring that staff who are pregnant or have recently given birth are protected from both direct and indirect discriminatory practices, disadvantage and unfavourable treatment.

We acknowledge that a pupil pregnancy could happen and there will be a plan in place, should this happen. We are also committed to ensuring pupils are protected from discrimination as entitled if they:

- are or have been pregnant;
- have given birth and unfavourable treatment occurred within 26 weeks of and including the day of the birth;
- are breastfeeding and unfavourable treatment occurs within 26 weeks of the birth as above;
- experienced a still birth, as long as the pregnancy reached 24 weeks;

To ensure pupils who are pregnant or have recently given birth or have experienced a still birth are protected from discriminatory practices, this school will not exclude them purely on the grounds of pregnancy and will provide up to 18 calendar weeks of authorised absence immediately before and after the birth to help reintegrated the pupil into education as quickly as possible.

7.7 Equal opportunities for staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.
- As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination, bullying and harassment (in all its forms) and victimisation in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. When incidents or issues of this nature are identified or reported, we will take account of the DfE guidance 'Preventing and tacking the bullying and harassment of school staff'.
- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- 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.

8. Roles and responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

8.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- ensure our school complies with all relevant equalities legislation;
- undertake relevant and up-to-date training in relation to our equality duties;
- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy and action plan;
- draw up, publish and implement our school's equality objectives;
- establish our Equality Objectives Action Plan is part of our School Improvement/Development Plan;
- support the Head teacher in implementing any actions necessary;
- ensure people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of a protected characteristics (disability, race, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity, age, marriage & civil partnership, and religion or belief, including lack of belief).
- take all reasonable steps to ensure our school environment is accessible to people with disabilities, and strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils;
- welcome all applications to join our school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race etc.;
- ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school because of their sex, disability etc.;
- inform and consult with parents, carers and the wider school community about the Policy;
- evaluate and review the information supporting the Policy annually;
- evaluate the objectives and action plan/school development plan at least every 4 years.

8.2 The Head teacher/senior leader responsible for equality

The Head teacher/senior leader responsible for equality will take steps to ensure:

- staff and parents are informed about the Equality Policy, objectives and action plan;
- staff understand the broad legal definition of disability;
- equality impact assessments are conducted on functions and Policies;
- the Policy is implemented effectively;
- they manage any day to day issues arising from the Policy whether for pupils, for our school as an employer or for our local community;
- staff have access to training which helps implement the Policy;
- they monitor the Policy, objectives and action plan and report to the Governing Body at least annually, on their effectiveness;
- the SLT are kept up to date with any developments which affect the Policy or action plan;
- appropriate support and monitoring is in place for all pupils and specific and targeted pupils under the Policy, with assistance from relevant agencies;
- all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities;
- the principles of equal opportunity are promoted when developing the curriculum, respect for other people, and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life;
- all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying, discrimination, including racist incidents, are appropriately recorded and treated with due seriousness and in line with the school Behaviour Policy and procedures;
- complaints of discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, or victimisation are dealt with speedily and complainants are notified of the outcome and actions taken;
- appropriate action is taken according to who is being affected e.g. pupil, member of staff, volunteer etc. in the event of equality expectations not being met
- partnerships with external agencies are developed so that the school's actions in relation to Equality are in line with the best advice available.

8.3 All staff: teaching, non-teaching and other adults involved with our school

All staff, both paid and unpaid are required to:

- understand and accept that equality is a whole school issue and support our Equality Policy and objectives;
- be aware of the Equality Policy and objectives and how they relate to them and their work;
- keep themselves up to date with relevant legislation and attend any training/information events;
- ask for support if they have questions or need training;
- ensure all pupils are treated fairly, equally (or equitably e.g. giving more or less support than to others to achieve the same aims), and with respect;
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils;
- strive to include materials that provide positive images, especially based on race, sex, and disability and that challenge stereotypical images;
- ensure that all pupils with a protected characteristic are included in all activities and have full access to the curriculum;
- promote equality and diversity through teaching and our relationships with pupils, staff, parents, and the wider community;
- understand how to deal with incidents of concern, and how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- know our procedures for reporting incidents of racism, harassment, or other forms of discrimination.

8.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected, and will be supported, to:

- be involved in the development of the Policy to help them understand how it relates to them in an age or ability appropriate way;
- act in accordance with any relevant part of the Policy;
- 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;
- help us ensure our peer support programme promotes understanding and supports pupils who are experiencing discrimination.

8.5 Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers, are expected to support our commitment to equality and comply with the duties set out in this Policy. We will provide guidance and information to
enable them to do this. Information will be placed on the school website (see sample PSED statement for school website) and on parent information boards.

9. Disseminating, monitoring and reviewing the Policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives and data is available:

- on the school website.
- as paper copies in the school office.
- in the staff handbook.
- on display for visitors, including parents and carers.

It can also be made available in other formats e.g. another language, or braille.

We update and re-publish our Equality Policy as necessary, our school profile and objectives annually to account for the September intake or staffing changes and how they affect diversity in school, and the action plan no less than every 4 years. We will also review our action plan in brief annually in light of any new objectives to ensure our longer-term goals remain relevant.

We publish copies of other relevant Policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs, on our school website.

10. Complaints

If a member of the public feels that they have suffered discrimination, harassment, or victimisation from this school because of their protected characteristic i.e. race (including nationality, ethnic group, regional or national origin), sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, disability, or religion or belief (including lack of belief), they should report it using our normal School's Complaints Procedure. For more information please see https://www.scmat.org.uk/about-us/governance/policies/complaints/

Complaints by staff will be dealt with under the Grievance Procedure, as appropriate. For more information please see https://www.scmat.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/SCMAT-GRIEVANCE-POLICY-2026-review.pdf

We take all complaints seriously and will take appropriate action to eliminate discriminatory behaviour.

We will monitor complaints to help establish whether we are meeting our equality duties and report regularly to the Governing Body about the nature of complaints made and action taken.

REFERENCED STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY GUIDANCE

The following statutory and non-statutory guidance was used in research and/or referenced in formulating this Equality Policy, Objectives and Action Plan:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010 and Schools (UK Gov Department for Education)
- Public Sector Equality Duty: Guidance for Schools (Equality and Human Rights Commission)
- The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty (EHRC)
- Technical guidanc on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England (EHRC)
- Sexual harassment and harassment at work: technical guidance (EHRC)
- Menopause in the workplace: Guidance for employers
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education
- DfE Preventing and tacking the bullying and harassment of school staff
- DfE Gender separation in mixed schools