Date established by governing body Autumn Term 2026 **Date for full implementation** Immediately **Date for review** Autumn Term 2029

Published equality information about the context of our school (2026)

Published objectives 2026-2029

Legal context

The EHRC's Technical Guidance for Schools (amended in July 2024) outlines the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 for schools in relation to the provision of education and access to benefits, facilities or services, both educational and non-educational. It provides an authoritative, comprehensive and technical guide to the detail of the law.

The Act covers discrimination based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These categories are known in the Act as 'protected characteristics'.

Schools have legal obligations under the Act not to discriminate against, harass or victimise pupils. All schools in England, irrespective of how they are funded or managed, have obligations under the Act. It is the responsible body of a school that is liable for any breaches of the Act. The responsible body for a school maintained by a local authority is the local authority or the governing body. The protected characteristics under the schools' provisions are:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Public sector equality duty came in to force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) and public authorities like state schools are required, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, which are to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require schools and other public authorities to publish:

- equality objectives, at least every four years (from 6th April 2012)
- information to demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty (from 31st January 2012)

This document details the ways in which we welcome and comply with the two aspects of the PSED listed above.

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. It includes information about the work we do to promote diversity, equality, inclusion and challenge discrimination.

Context:

Cleaswell Hill School is a larger than average sized specialist school in the South East of Northumberland. It has grown rapidly in recent years to 253 pupils in September 2025 and now extends over two sites. Children from the age of four through to eighteen come to Cleaswell Hill. Their additional needs include complex and multiple learning disabilities and difficulties, speech, language and communication needs, physical and sensory needs. The predominant need is autism spectrum condition. 75% of the population is male.

The school's ambitious curriculum is responsive and underpins the themes linked to our identified values of; resilience, determination, respect, integrity, independence and happiness.

We prepare children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adulthood. Children and young people are taught in a way that they can understand about protected characteristics, about their rights and responsibilities. There is zero tolerance of bullying or discrimination, and this is reflected in the school's ethos and values.

A small number of our pupils speak a community language other than English or are of Global Majority heritage. Developing the school to be inclusive and representative of these children's identities is especially important to everyone on the staff involved in creating an enabling environment that helps every pupil to feel that they belong.

Our large number of pupils identified as disadvantaged (Over 50%) in respect of whom we receive the Pupil Premium Grant, are supported by research and evidence-based strategies in order to demonstrate the impact the funding has on diminishing the differences in outcomes for these pupils compared with their peers.

We represent, discuss and welcome diversity and the positive aspects of individuality. Staff are encouraged to challenge viewpoints that they do not feel promote equality and to challenge perceptions of stigma and inequality; our priority is that every child feels safe and knows that we are committed to our legal duty to safeguard every member of the school community from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. This is underpinned by relational practice, vigilant monitoring of behavioural incidents, low level concerns and parental communication.

As a school, we recognise that language and aspects of identity are constantly changing. It is a workforce EDI responsibility to be informed and to develop practice where outdated terminology, misconceptions and stereotypes are challenged. This can be a difficult agenda to manage with such a complex school community and so many different demands on CPD and training time. We try to blend offers of training from external agencies, online and internal providers; however, this is an important area for further development, especially in the area of curriculum design.

Staff work supportively with pupils about concepts of gender, gender questioning, sex or sexual orientation. Adults in school are expected to challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender equality. There is a comprehensive and developing Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum, differentiated for the needs of all pupils and based upon Chailey Heritage Foundation's 'The Sex Factor' Relationship and Sex Education for children and young people with complex neuro-disabilities.

Our intention is that all of our pupils succeed and achieve, academically, physically and socially in an atmosphere where they are nurtured, challenged and supported.

Personal Development is targeted at need, bespoke to each child's personal learning targets and key to helping to develop each child's sense of belonging and boundaries, independence and resilience, according to the pathway they follow. To support this work we recently used grant funding from the North East Combined Authority to develop Enrichment Passports which are designed to help our students to develop new areas of interest and challenges; experiences they would like to have during the time they are pupils here.

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 environment is constantly being adapted and updated to meet the needs of children with complex needs and disabilities.

Through fundraising, the school has constructed a hydrotherapy pool on site. The warm water provides a therapeutic context for some of the most complex children; supporting the building of relationships and communication. Out of hours hire of this valuable resource also enhances the experiences of the community members who are able to benefit from this asset and generates income towards the running costs.

Rebound therapy is increasingly available to children who might not previously have been considered to receive it due to excellent training and flexibility, for example children who find unstructured play challenging access rebound at break times. As a result of attending training, the lead rebound therapist now integrates sensory regulation therapy with rebound therapy.

Therapeutic strategies and approaches are integrated within the curriculum across school. Specialist training and therapist roles enhance the offers of support to pupils through Speech and Language Therapy, play therapy, training and support for visual impairment and a mental health lead. To maintain strong links with other therapists working in SEND schools, we are establishing a CPD group. This will also help in maintaining CPD records which are necessary for our Code of Practice

The main building (ground floor) and extensive school grounds are accessible for people with physical disabilities, with ramps, accessible bathrooms and wheelchair accessible routes. All new buildings are accessible.

The voice of children and young people informs our priorities when we develop our Accessibility Plan.

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 all pupils.

The school aims to extend children's understanding of fostering good relations and challenging discrimination in a practical context through the curriculum and targeted interventions. We recognise that for many of our children experiences of friendship, resilience, dealing with feelings and feeling safe to share concerns with adults can be challenging.

Radicalisation and safeguarding training are up to date. Adults understand referral routes and ensure that their concerns are shared and interventions are requested if a young person is considered to be at risk.

Documentation and record-keeping.

We record and report instances of discriminatory language or bullying using our online Positive Behaviour Cloud and work to help children to value and promote kind and respectful relationships.

Harmful sexual behaviours are logged on our CPOMS system.

Responsibilities

All staff agree that that have read, understood and agree to follow Part One in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

All staff are trained in child protection and safeguarding and have received copies of the policy.

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

All staff take responsibility for anti-bullying good practice.

Behaviour and attitudes

The school's Positive Behaviour Policy is available on the website.

We collaborate with local and national programmes and make links to well established cultural and statutory partners who support our aims.

Curriculum

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

Education for character is integral to the work of Cleaswell Hill School, focused through the Personal Development whole school targets.

Curriculum design is an iterative process of continual improvement, and consciously representing diversity, equality and inclusive concepts in our curriculum content is prioritised.

Consultation and involvement

The school has procedures for finding out how pupils think and feel about the school, and how they feel about equality and fair or unfair situations.

The school has mechanisms for consulting and involving parents and carers, and for engaging with local groups and organisations.

We consult parents and carers through surveys, Facebook, School Ping and the school website. It is vital that we respond quickly to any concern about perceived inequality, unlawful discrimination or harassment.

Part Two: Objectives

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

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

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

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

Equality Objective 2026–2029

To create an inclusive school community where every child and young person feels seen, valued, respected and that they belong, through a curriculum, environment and culture that positively represents and celebrates diversity, disability, individual identity and lived experience.

We will actively promote equality of opportunity by removing barriers to participation, communication, learning, achievement and independence, ensuring that all pupils can access meaningful opportunities, develop self-advocacy, and prepare successfully for adulthood.

We will place particular emphasis on promoting positive disability identity, self-advocacy and pupil voice, enabling children and young people to influence curriculum content, school culture, environmental developments and equality initiatives through communication approaches that reflect their individual needs. We plan to continue to use evidence and research proven to build a curriculum and school community that embraces, celebrates, highlights and recognises diversity. Curriculum delivery will be within, and contribute to, an enabling environment, flourishing relationships and content that whispers 'you belong.

We will develop staff knowledge, skills and confidence through training, research, professional enquiry and engagement with lived experiences so that they can effectively support the diverse and complex needs of our pupils, challenge discrimination, address stereotypes and foster a culture of inclusion, dignity and belonging. Representation through the curriculum and in the everyday life of the school of race, culture, religion and belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender and gender questioning identities ensure that every child is seen and recognises that we respect and value difference.

Implementation

Outward-Facing Partnerships, System Leadership and Sharing Best Practice

- Lead and expand the work of the **Neuroinclusive Education Network (NEN)**, delivering a programme of evidence-informed training, coaching and professional dialogue through face-to-face, online and hybrid platforms to support schools in developing inclusive and neuro affirming practice.
- Work collaboratively with local universities, learning hubs, schools, MATs, Northumberland partners and specialist provisions to contribute to research, professional enquiry, workforce development and the dissemination of effective inclusive practice.
- Share expertise in autism, communication, sensory needs, therapeutic approaches, Preparation for Adulthood and adaptive teaching through outreach, professional learning networks, conferences, collaborative projects and school-to-school support.
- Further develop Cleaswell Hill School's role as a centre of excellence for inclusive education by creating opportunities for practitioners to observe, reflect upon and implement evidence-informed approaches that remove barriers to participation, belonging and achievement.
- Strengthen partnerships between education, health and care professionals, including therapist networks and specialist services, to promote integrated approaches that improve outcomes for children and young people with complex needs and disabilities.
- Encourage staff engagement in professional enquiry, action research and collaborative improvement projects, enabling innovation and successful practice to be shared both within school and across the wider education community.
- Contribute to the development of an inclusive workforce across the region through mentoring, coaching, placements, professional learning opportunities and collaborative leadership initiatives.

Enrichment, Personal Development and Preparation for Adulthood

- **Therapeutic Approaches:** Continue to develop and integrate therapeutic approaches across the curriculum, ensuring that speech and language, sensory regulation, play, communication, emotional wellbeing, physical development and mental health are embedded within everyday learning experiences.
- **Personal Development:** Deliver a high-quality Personal Development curriculum that promotes belonging, resilience, independence, self-advocacy, communication, healthy relationships, wellbeing, citizenship and positive participation in society.

- **Preparation for Adulthood:** Expand opportunities for pupils to develop independence, community participation, employability, decision-making and life skills through meaningful Preparation for Adulthood pathways that reflect individual aspirations and EHCP outcomes.
- **Enrichment Passports:** Further develop and evaluate Enrichment Passports, ensuring all pupils access a broad range of cultural, creative, sporting, community and aspirational experiences that widen horizons and support personal growth.
- **Physical Development and Wellbeing:** Continue the implementation of the Fundamentals of Movement curriculum and therapeutic physical activity programmes, promoting healthy lifestyles, physical confidence, engagement, interaction, communication and lifelong wellbeing.
- **Removing Barriers Through Inclusion:** Utilise Pupil Premium and evidence-informed interventions to reduce barriers to learning, participation and achievement, ensuring disadvantaged pupils access the same rich opportunities for enrichment, leadership, independence and success as their peers.
- **Pupil Voice and Leadership:** Create meaningful opportunities for children and young people to influence school improvement, enrichment opportunities, environmental developments and curriculum experiences through personalised communication approaches that ensure every voice can be heard.
- **Community Engagement and Belonging:** Promote participation in school, local and regional activities that enable pupils to contribute positively to their communities, develop social capital and experience a strong sense of belonging and achievement.

Protected Characteristics, Vulnerability and Safeguarding

Develop a culture of vigilance and proactive safeguarding that recognises the additional vulnerabilities which may be experienced by children and young people with disabilities, communication needs and complex learning needs, ensuring that pupils are protected, listened to and supported.

- Strengthen staff knowledge and confidence in identifying, preventing and responding to emerging safeguarding risks, including harmful online content, AI-enabled risks, online exploitation, grooming, coercion, substance misuse, radicalisation, prejudice-based incidents and hate crime.

- Promote positive disability identity, self-esteem and self-advocacy, enabling pupils to recognise their rights, communicate concerns, make informed choices and develop the confidence to participate fully in school and community life.
- Ensure pupils access age-appropriate, personalised learning that supports understanding of healthy relationships, consent, personal safety, online safety, protected characteristics and respectful behaviour towards others.
- Foster a school culture where diversity, difference and individuality are valued and celebrated, and where discrimination, bullying, harassment, prejudice and stereotypes are actively challenged.
- Monitor and respond to the experiences of vulnerable groups through safeguarding reviews, pupil voice, behaviour and attendance information, achievement data and family feedback to ensure emerging barriers or inequalities are identified and addressed promptly.
- Work collaboratively with families, external agencies and community partners to promote safety, wellbeing, equality of opportunity and positive outcomes for all children and young people.

Accessible Communication, Information and Environments

- Continue to improve access to learning, communication and participation through personalised communication approaches, assistive technology, visual supports and accessible information that enable every pupil to understand, engage and contribute meaningfully to school life.
- Ensure that physical, sensory and social environments are regularly reviewed and adapted to meet the diverse needs of pupils, promoting independence, dignity, wellbeing, participation and belonging.
- Involve pupils, families and staff in evaluating accessibility through consultation, pupil voice activities and environmental reviews, ensuring that improvements reflect lived experiences and identified needs.
- Develop accessible systems of communication with families through a range of formats and approaches that strengthen engagement, co-production and partnership working.

Inclusive Leadership and Continuous Improvement

- Ensure that equality, inclusion and accessibility are considered within all school improvement priorities, strategic developments, curriculum reviews and decision-making processes.
- Monitor the experiences, participation and outcomes of different groups of pupils to identify barriers, reduce inequalities and inform future improvement planning.

- Use research, professional enquiry, staff development, pupil voice and family feedback to continually strengthen inclusive practice and promote a culture of reflection, innovation and high expectations.
- Strengthen leadership capacity at all levels so that accessibility, belonging and equality remain shared responsibilities across the whole school community.

Intended Outcomes

By 2029:

- Pupils report feeling safe, valued, represented and included within their school community.
- Pupils demonstrate increasing confidence in expressing their views, preferences and aspirations through appropriate communication methods.
- Disability is positively represented across the curriculum and school environment, promoting pride, self-advocacy and high aspirations.
- Curriculum audits demonstrate meaningful representation of diversity, equality and protected characteristics across all pathways and subject areas.
- Staff demonstrate increased confidence and competence in supporting diverse identities, needs and experiences.
- Families report that they feel included, listened to and involved in shaping school improvement.
- Pupils are increasingly prepared for adulthood through opportunities that develop independence, communication, community participation and decision-making.
- Participation, engagement and achievement remain strong across all groups of pupils.
- Accessible communication, information and environments enable all pupils, families and visitors to participate fully in school life and feel a strong sense of belonging within the school community.

How We Will Measure Impact

Progress towards this objective will be monitored through:

- Annual curriculum and equality audits.
- Accessibility reviews and inclusion learning walks.
- Pupil voice activities using personalised communication approaches.

- Parent and family feedback.
- Staff training and workforce development evaluations.
- Monitoring of participation, attendance and achievement data.
- EHCP outcomes and Preparation for Adulthood outcomes.
- Governor monitoring and scrutiny of equality and inclusion priorities.

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