



What I learn today, prepares me for tomorrow.

Equality Objectives

2021-2025

Policy Location:	Written:	Review Due:	Person Responsible:
Staff Share -> Policy Library	November 2021	November 2025	Mark Phillips, Headteacher SLT All staff Strategic Committee

Barndale House Special School. Published equality information about the context of our school (2021)

Published objectives 2021-2025

This is our published information (2021) 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 equality and challenge discrimination.

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 is a relatively small 2-19 special school in the centre of Alnwick, a market town in the north of Northumberland. The school has recently admitted a significant number of new pupils. There is residential provision on site where up to 9 pupils per night are offered a 24-hour curriculum Monday-Thursday. The school has a strategic plan which outlines our ambitions for the children, the communities we support (children attend from Morpeth to Berwick and the far west of the county) and our vision for learning. Part of that vision is to increase the availability of residential places to offer more children and young people aged 7 and above the opportunity to benefit from the 24-hour curriculum and the important role it plays in Preparation for Adulthood. Children who attend Barndale House represent all of the diverse communities found in Northumberland; from the most isolated rural settings, to the busier towns in the North Northumberland region.

We teach children about their rights and the school's values, about respect for one another and the wider communities to which they belong. We recognise and support the unique personalities and characteristics of each child. Our school promotes and teaches the children to understand pluralistic British values; concepts such as mutual respect, acceptance of different viewpoints, support to make decisions democratically and to realise why boundaries are useful are all developed and integral to the daily life of the school.

A very small number of pupils speak community languages in addition to English.

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 PPG funding on diminishing the differences in outcomes for these students compared with their peers. The proportion of pupils in receipt of the grant is more than twice the [national average](#). We use the additional funding effectively to offer academic support and guidance using evidence-based approaches to developing literacy and numeracy. The funding is also used to improve and modernise the learning environment; food technology and workshop spaces, for example. The school pays for Occupational Therapists to support children, and the grant helps to pay for and run the 3 vehicles which provide transport so that students have opportunities to experience life and activities in the local and wider community. Objectives relating to children eligible for Free School Meals have a high priority for schools in demonstrating how they eliminate inequality, even though financial disadvantage is not a protected characteristic. Many of our eligible pupils have additional protected characteristics and vulnerabilities.

The school is situated in a ward of deprivation, and in order to give all pupils the best start to the day, we partner with sustainable food providers to offer a free breakfast, and to sometimes supplement school meals with healthy food donations. There is a children's centre on the site the school shares with another school and a community centre, and we are all working in partnership to develop diversionary and engaging activities for young people in the local community with a view to improving the security and safety of our sites for the vulnerable people who use all of the facilities. This has involved partnership working with the emergency services and other community partners.

We represent, discuss and welcome family diversity and the positive aspects of individuality in families. We establish safe spaces for changing and using toilet facilities and make sensitive adaptations when a child or young person needs to discuss or obtain emotional support or education regarding the protected characteristics of sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

Our school uniform policy is flexible and the guidance does not discriminate against any child on the basis of sex, race, disability, gender reassignment, religion or belief.

The school has data on its composition broken down by types of disability and special educational need.

There are bespoke pathways for learning, and these all incorporate physical, social and emotional support. All staff have completed Mental Health First Aid training. The role of Mental Health Lead in school is being developed and all staff help to promote emotional health and wellbeing and a range of strategies to support resilience and mental health. Specialist support from other agencies is requested as needed.

Children and young people in school use Zones of Regulation to communicate the way that they feel; it provides a common language which staff can attune to and help those children who need more support to regulate their feelings and readiness to learn.

The school is as accessible a building as can be achieved given the open aspects of some of the site, the different buildings, the age of the listed buildings and the challenges of the ongoing adaptations that need to be made. Some of the urgent needs to be addressed include; play space, inside and out, a space large enough to assemble large groups of pupils, for an assembly, a staff room and some of the residential provision. Inequalities of outcome, access and involvement are all taken into account when setting objectives for achievable and measurable improvements for children with disabilities. These are outlined in greater detail in the school's accessibility plan.

We record and report instances of discriminatory language or bullying. We are able to report racist incidents using the Local Authority [online form](#) which also gives schools the opportunity to request further support to deal with hate crime and extremism or request support from Local Safeguarding Partners.

There is an Intimate Care Plan and all pupils who receive medical and intimate care are treated with dignity and respect.

All other events of discrimination, peer-on-peer abuse or perceived harassment are recorded using CPOMS which helps to build a full picture around a child.

All staff recognise the relationship between hate crime and radicalisation or extremism. We challenge and respond quickly to establish any concerning influences that may be present in pupils' lives. We do recognise that some pupils may have few opportunities to experience the wider UK and urban contexts

outside Northumberland and when possible and safe, develop a programme of learning with visits and visitors to broaden understanding of the wider multicultural, multi-faith context of modern Britain.

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.

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.

Responsibilities

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

All staff take responsibility for anti-bullying.

Staffing

There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of all staff.

Behaviour, safety and personal development

The PSHE curriculum and the wider focus on learning in school places great value on learning about fair and equal relationships, respect, values and consent.

When appropriate, we engage with community partners to demonstrate our integrity in supporting those with protected characteristics from vulnerability to hate crime, sexual abuse or 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 anti-bullying policy is available from the school web site.

Curriculum

There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion, safe and respectful relationships and mutual understanding.

The school ensures that children learn in an age-appropriate way to value and access their rights and those of other children.

There are activities across the curriculum to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to help them to develop their character. This further extends children's' understanding and experience of equality.

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.

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 online surveys and a parent social media site. The school has an open-door policy and communicates half-termly with parents and carers about the learning that is taking place. We are able to 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.

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

Theme: The physical environment

In order for pupils at Barndale House School to have the best possible chances of achieving and accessing all of the statutory elements of the curriculum, we need to ensure that the school environment is fit for purpose.

The age of the buildings and school site provide challenges; issues of maintenance and repair, security, outdoor space and the desire to develop and maintain the residential provision as a vital element of preparation for adulthood all impact on the chances children at Barndale House have to experience equality and parity with their peers in other Northumberland schools and settings.

We will continue to work to meet the challenges of bringing the site up to date, and ensuring the safety and integrity of the building as well as other, ambitious plans, for example to have private, ensuite bedrooms are prioritised and addressed.

We will update this objective annually with priorities, progress, and plans.

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

Theme: Ensuring legal compliance; the correct use of the language of equality diversity and inclusion, staff awareness and training to ensure understanding and compliance. Timely referrals and support for children and young people.

The language, terminology and identities that we work with are changing and evolving all of the time. To help develop our entire workforce to have awareness and confidence to recognise these, and to use the terminology that is right for the children and young people and their families, we will work to:

- Use the language of the Equality Act in all of our interactions and record keeping
- Audit documentation and data collection mechanisms to ensure that the correct terms are used (eg. Sex rather than gender)
- Ensure that staff access training and support that keeps their understanding up to date
- We will ensure that we understand and make timely referrals to professional support available to children and young people with protected characteristics when it is needed.

3: Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Theme: External partners

We will work with external partners and organisations to ensure that children and young people are able to find supportive networks and communities that help them to feel safe and supported.

This will include:

- Networking parents with one-another for mutual support and to strengthen the school community
- Working with the local Children's Centre and Community Safety partners
- Responding to the changing needs of the pupils to ensure that they can access supportive networks and are promptly directed towards referral routes.
- Being open to developing new partnerships, such as Northumberland Pride, Trinity Youth Association; Northumberland Participation Team.

4: Equality of opportunity: RSHE Statutory curriculum

Recognising that many of our pupils will live independent lives and form partnerships and relationships, we want to give them the best experience of Relationships, Sex and Health Education. We will work to contextualise, resource and implement the new statutory curriculum to ensure that students have access to the content and Programme of Study that prepares them well for adult lives and relationships.

This approach will involve staff training, a review of resources and collaborative approaches with other special schools in the county to share best practice and resources.

These objectives replace the previous equality objectives set in 2016.

Progress against the objectives will be reviewed annually, and they will remain our objectives until April 2025 when they are due to be refreshed