Temple Sowerby CE Primary School

EQUALITY POLICY, OBJECTIVES & ACTION PLAN

2026 – 2027

Approved by[1]	
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Position:	Head teacher
Signed:	
Date:	October 26
Proposed review date[2]:	October 27

[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.	Jan 2026
4	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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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. Purpose of the Policy

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 (the Policy) to show compliance with the Equality Duty;
2. publish equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

This Policy describes how our school, which has very limited resources, is meeting these statutory duties and working hard to ensure that equality is at the core of all that we do. This document is supported by our Equality Objectives Action Plan which demonstrates how we intend to ensure that principles of equality are embedded into our school and community life.

We utilise a PSED checklist for school staff and governors to help assess the school's compliance with our PSED duties. Further information on how the Equality Act applies to schools can be found in the Department for Education (DfE) document Equality Act 2010: advice for schools.

3. 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
- 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
- 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

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.

4. Our school profile

Temple Sowerby CE Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School with 52 pupils currently enrolled and a strong Christian ethos which develops the whole child. The roll of the school has increased in recent years following the success of our pre-school provision, with numbers in recent years fluctuating up to 60. 2 children (4.7% of pupils) take free school meals (FSM), well below the national average of 24.9% (DfE Jan 2026). 12.3% of our pupils have special educational needs and we have no ethnic minority pupils. Some of our pupils come from outside our official catchment area, attracted by our school's reputation and our breakfast club which operates from 8.00am and after-school club which operates to 5.00pm each evening.

We have several vulnerable groups including those with special educational, learning and medical needs.

We have never had problems attracting staff and have a full teaching staff complement.

The Local Authority (LA) handles admissions to the school. When we are made aware of pupils who are joining the school with special educational needs or disabilities, we arrange to meet the pupil and parents or carers and involve professionals from the LA and Health Authority to ensure any adjustments required to our buildings or curriculum are made in readiness for them starting school. The school has ramped access and is level throughout the building enabling access to wheelchair users. Our reception area is accessible to people with disabilities. We have one disabled toilet which also contains an adjustable changing bed for use by those pupils who need personal care whilst at school.

Information for parents and others is provided in verbal and written form.

Recruitment procedures are based on those provided by our LA with all advertising being processed through the Council HR and Advertising Team.

5. What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled staff and pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- We offer a highly adaptive curriculum to support all pupils, meeting them where they are
- Offer an intervention timetable that reflect the broad areas of needs and matches the needs of our pupils
- The Head teacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this Policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We actively promote equality and diversity though the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect and belonging for all.
- Our school values, underpinned by our Christian vision provides pupils with the guidance to make informed actions as a British citizen in a multi-cultural society.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.
- We challenge all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying.

Behaviour, exclusions and attendance

The school policies on behaviour and attendance take full account of our duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of overrepresentation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and discriminatory-based bullying

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and discriminatory-based bullying (both on and off-line), which stand in the way of
fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality, including:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs.
- prejudices around race, religion or beliefs.
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation.

6. What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different pupil groups

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills. We also ensure children from all groups are challenged to reach higher levels.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.
- We collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance of different groups.
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.
- We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- Our school has an accessibility plan that is reviewed every 2 years or when a significant change has taken place. The Plan is published on the school website.
- We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

7. What we are doing to foster good relations

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship and across the curriculum.
- We consider gender and identity issues using information from KCSiE and additional legislation relating to safeguarding requirements (including gender questioning children and social transition).
- We explicitly teach the British Values and refer to these alongside our core Christian values.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender identity, sexuality, disability and avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice-based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We take incidents of abuse, sexual violence and harassment seriously and have a zero tolerance to any abusive behaviour between all members of the school community;
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.

- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and sympathise with different experiences.
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors and whole school events.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equality meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- review relevant feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-school forum and/or focus meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting.
- secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events.
- review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children from the School Council.
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings.

8. Publishing equality information and objectives

We identify and publish equality objectives on a four-year cycle. The objectives are reviewed each year by the school's Governors and SLT and are available on our website. We are happy to provide our equality objectives in other formats if requested.

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.

9. Roles and responsibilities

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

Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this Policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented and form part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP); support is provided to the Head teacher in implementing any actions necessary. The Governing Body/LAB will receive and attend training in order to successfully discharge their duties under the legislation.

Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Equality objectives are set every four years by the Governing Body. The Governing Body assess the success in reaching the objectives annually.

Head teacher and Leadership team

The Head teacher is responsible for implementing the Policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; developing partnerships with external agencies regarding the Policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available; ensuring Equality Impact Assessments are conducted on functions and Policies; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

Alongside the wider staffing team the Headtecher has day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the Policy and for monitoring outcomes.

Teaching and support staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom;
- challenge prejudice and discrimination;
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur;
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability;
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils;
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult;
- keep up to date with equality legislation relevant to their work.

Pupils

Pupils are expected, and will be supported, to:

- 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.

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.

10. 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, sexual harassment, harassment and victimisation in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.
- 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, administrative staff, and others employed on a regular basis by external organisations, receive appropriate training and, where applicable, opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

11. Monitoring and reviewing the Policy

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.

12. Disseminating the Policy

This Equality Policy, along with the Equality Objectives and related information, is available:

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

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

13. Complaints

Complaints arising from the operation of this Policy will be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure.

Complaints by staff will be dealt with under the Grievance Procedure, as appropriate. For more information, please see the staff grievance procedure. 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.

14. Action Plan

Equality Objectives Action Plan – 2025-29

Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED): eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation (EUDHV); equality of opportunity (EO); fostering good relations (FGR)

PSED	Protected Characteristic/ Equality Group	Aim	Objective	Target Group(s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff	Action	Who is responsible?	Dates from and to:	Indicator of Achievement
EO - Equality of Opportunity	Sex/Gender	Ensure boys and girls achieve equally across the curriculum	Continually monitor and narrow any gaps between boys and girls in reading, writing and maths – ongoing over 4 years	Boys, girls	Analyse attainment data by gender, implement targeted support or enrichment, monitor interventions	Headteacher, Class teachers, SENCO	Ongoing 2025 -2029	Gender gaps in attainment reduce or close, interventions show positive impact
FGR – Fostering Good Relations	Race, religion, belief	Broaden pupils' understanding of diverse communities	Provide experiences that expose children to urban, multi-ethnic and multi-faith environments	All pupils	Organise trips to cities with diverse communities and to centres of different faiths. Build links with other schools.	Headteacher, Class teachers, SENCO	Ongoing 2025 -2029	Pupils demonstrate greater cultural awareness (pupil voice, work scrutiny, collective worship)
FGR – Fostering Good Relations	Race	Promote positive attitudes towards different ethnicities and cultures	Ensure school environment and curriculum materials reflect ethnic and cultural diversity	All pupils	Review and refresh curriculum and teaching resources. Use diverse texts and reflect in displays	Headteacher, subject leads	Ongoing 2025 -2029	Curriculum reflects wider diversity; this is reflected in pupil awareness of diversity (discussion, work scrutiny)
Date Action Agreed:		October 2025			**Date Agreed for Review:**	Annually, with full review October 29		

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)