



Hillcross Primary School

Equality, Diversity and Cohesion Policy

Mission, Vision and Culture

At Hillcross we nurture our children to think critically and creatively within a collaborative community.

Our outstanding practice ensures our children meet their full potential, both personally and academically, and provides opportunities for them to develop their unique talents and skills. As a nationally recognized Thinking School, we nurture an empathetic community of creative and critical thinkers. We achieve success for all through our dynamic and ambitious curriculum, inclusive learning, promoting fairness and celebrating diversity. Through our school culture of high aspiration, embracing challenge, acting with compassion, a shared responsibility and by showing respect for all, we aim to develop a resilient school community of compassionate global citizens.

Legal duties

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race and ethnicity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation; and our specific duties to publish information every year about our school population.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

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.

Introduction

Our school is committed to equality and equity both as an employer and a service-provider. While equality and equity are closely related concepts, they have fundamentally different goals.

- Equality means treating everyone the exact same and providing every individual with the exact same resources or opportunities.
 - Equality focuses on sameness (everyone gets the same thing).
 - Equality assumes that everyone is starting from the exact same place and faces the same barriers.
- Equity means ensuring fairness by providing people with the specific resources and support they need based on their individual circumstances and starting points.
 - Equity focuses on fairness (everyone gets what they need to succeed).
 - Equity acknowledges that people have different starting points and systemic challenges.

Equality provides equal opportunity; equity aims to ensure equal outcomes.

We believe that in practice, neither is "better" than the other; they must be balanced.

- Equality establishes a universal baseline of rights and baseline opportunities.
- Equity steps in to correct the systemic imbalances that equality alone cannot address.

We aim to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities and that they are treated fairly and with respect. We want to make sure that our school is a safe, secure and stimulating place for everyone. The Equality Act protects people from discrimination on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. Every person has several of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects everyone against unfair treatment.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations referred to above we are guided by nine principles.

Principle 1: All learners are of equal worth

We see all learners, potential learners and their parents and carers as of equal worth:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their sex and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual orientation

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally does not involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- sex, so that the needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised
- gender identity, so that it is accepted that not everyone identifies with the gender ascribed to them at birth
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual orientation

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of discrimination, harassment and victimisation of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, religion, belief or faith background, and an absence of racist and religiously motivated bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between sexes, and an absence of sexual harassment and harassment, discrimination and victimisation because of sex
- mutual respect and good relations between pupils, parents and carers regardless of sexual orientation, and an absence of discrimination and victimisation because of sexual orientation
- positive attitudes towards transgender people and an absence of discrimination, harassment and victimisation because of gender identity

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, religion, belief or faith background
- whatever their sex and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity
- whatever their gender identity
- whatever their sexual orientation
- whatever their status with regards to marriage and civil partnership

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- sexes
- cisgender and transgender people
- heterosexual, lesbian, gay, and bisexual people

- older and younger people

Principle 6: We consult widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious and non-religious backgrounds
- people of different sexes
- lesbian, gay and bisexual people as well as heterosexual people
- transgender people as well as cisgender people
- older and younger people

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious and non-religious backgrounds
- people of different sexes
- lesbian, gay and bisexual people as well as heterosexual people
- transgender people as well as cisgender people
- older and younger people

Principle 8: We base our policies and practice on sound evidence

We collect and publish quantitative and qualitative information, which shows our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and use this information to inform our practice. Evidence related to equality is integrated into our self-evaluation documentation.

Principle 9: We work towards measurable equality objectives

We create and publish specific and measurable equality objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted and the evidence that we have collected and published.

The objectives that we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues as appropriate.

Our equality objectives are devised in consultation with children, staff and school governors and integrated into the school improvement plan. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them. Please see our current **Equality Objectives** by clicking on this link: [Equality Objectives 2025 - 2026](#). *(This link will be amended once new ones have been agreed in September)*

The curriculum

Our bespoke curriculum has been designed to utilise opportunities to build awareness, understanding and respect for everyone, to recognise and respect difference and to promote positive attitudes and relationships so that we eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles outlined above.

Ethos and organisation

At Hillcross our culture is underpinned by the four C's: collaboration, consistency, challenge and celebration. Fostering good relations and promoting community cohesion underpin all we do.

The development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also a significant element of our school ethos. We provide a range of opportunities for children to take part in a variety of artistic, cultural, sporting, dramatic, musical, mathematical, scientific and technological events and activities that promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We:

- ✓ recognise and celebrate all the beliefs, religious or otherwise reflected within our school community and encourage respect for different people's feelings and values (spiritual development);

- ✓ support children to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to apply this understanding in their own lives (moral development);
- ✓ enable children to work and socialise with people from different backgrounds and promote cooperation and resolution of conflict (social development);
- ✓ as well as fostering understanding of and respect for cultural diversity (cultural development).

We ensure that the principles listed above also apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- learners' progress, attainment and assessment
- learners' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- safeguarding
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in the legal duties section above:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices against religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia
- prejudices reflecting sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children.

There is guidance in the Relationships and Behaviour Policy, the Anti-Bullying Policy and the staff handbook (*this needs updating if we decide to continue with it*) on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents, including the type of incident, seriousness and how the incident was dealt with.

Roles and responsibilities

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. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination. A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles outlined above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL. We have an Equality Leader (supported by the Headteacher) and child-led Equality and Wellbeing Committee who champion for and offer support for pupils, staff and families.

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff development and training

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.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and governing body.

Monitoring and evaluation

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular, we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, national origin and national status; religion, belief and faith background; and sex.

Please see **Equality Information Overview** for more detailed information: [Equality Information June 2026](#).

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We are committed to treating all members of the school community fairly and challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any member of the school community and it helps to promote equality and accessibility at our school. The curriculum

is planned to be inclusive and meet the needs and interests of a full range of learners. Activities and resources will be differentiated and adult support used to ensure that children access the curriculum and make the best possible progress.

Safeguarding Commitment

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in line with the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We take seriously our duty of care to our pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism - this includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. We work closely with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Radicalisation is recognised as a specific safeguarding issue and is addressed in line with the Government Prevent Strategy and The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

Privacy Policy

Hillcross school is committed to ensuring protection of all personal information that we hold. We recognise our obligations under the GDPR and Data Protection act 2018. Our practice is documented in our Data Protection Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Governing Body will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy on an annual basis including trends in progression across specific groups of teachers to assess its effect and the school's continued compliance with equalities legislation.

Date of last review: (Updated Sep 2025 in line with KCSIE) June 2026

Date of next review: June 2027