



Reviewed Date:	Reviewed By:	List of changes	Next Review
August 2021	Luke Collins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Altered protected characteristics in line with equalities act ● Changed staff CPD statement 	August 2022
February 2022	Luke Collins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewed by Luke Collins with some minor grammatical changes made 	January 2023
February 2023	Luke Collins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewed by Luke Collins with no changes made 	February 2024
February 2024	Luke Collins	Reviewed by Luke Collins with no changes made	February 2025
February 2025	Luke Collins	Reviewed by Luke Collins with no changes made	February 2026
February 2026	Luke Collins	Updated with key staff, made better links to other areas such as safeguarding, SEND and recruitment.	February 2027

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction and Policy Statement</i>	4
<i>Aims of the Policy</i>	4
<i>Legal and Statutory Framework</i>	4
<i>Scope of the Policy</i>	5
<i>Protected Characteristics</i>	5
<i>Forms of Discrimination</i>	5
<i>Ethos and Atmosphere</i>	6
<i>Learning Environment</i>	6
<i>The Taught Curriculum</i>	7
<i>Resources and Materials</i>	7
<i>Language and Communication</i>	8
<i>Organisation of Learning</i>	8
<i>Extra-Curricular Provision</i>	8
<i>Provision for Bilingual Pupils and Pupils with English as an Additional Language</i>	9
<i>Special Educational Needs, Disability and Reasonable Adjustments</i>	9
<i>Safeguarding, Equality and Child-on-Child Abuse</i>	10
<i>Harassment, Bullying and Discriminatory Incidents</i>	10
<i>Staffing, Safer Recruitment and Staff Development</i>	11
<i>Parents, Carers, Visitors and the Wider Community</i>	11
<i>Roles and Responsibilities</i>	11
<i>Monitoring, Review and Equality Objectives</i>	12
<i>Linked Policies and Documents</i>	13
<i>References Used for This Policy Review</i>	13

Introduction and Policy Statement

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff, leaders, directors and proprietor of New Direction School to ensuring equality of opportunity, respect, inclusion and dignity for all members of the school community.

This policy applies to pupils, prospective pupils, teaching staff, support staff, leaders, directors, the proprietor, parents and carers, visitors, contractors, external professionals, volunteers and students on placement.

New Direction School is committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment where everyone is treated fairly, discrimination is challenged, and all pupils are supported to achieve their potential. Equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of school life and are the responsibility of every member of the school community.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all individuals within the school community. Overall responsibility for ensuring that equality of opportunity remains a high priority rests with the Proprietor, supported by the Directors and the Head of Education.

Aims of the Policy

Through this policy, New Direction School aims to:

- promote equality of opportunity for all members of the school community;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- 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;
- ensure that pupils have access to an ambitious, broad and appropriate curriculum;
- ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and visitors where required;
- ensure that discriminatory, prejudicial or harmful behaviour is identified, challenged, recorded and addressed;
- support pupils to understand diversity, respect difference and contribute positively to life in modern Britain;
- ensure that safeguarding, welfare, SEND, behaviour, attendance and curriculum decisions take proper account of equality and inclusion.

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy has been written with regard to the following legislation, statutory guidance and relevant expectations:

- Equality Act 2010 and associated DfE advice for schools;
- Public Sector Equality Duty principles under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010;

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, where equality or safeguarding information is recorded and shared.

This policy should be read alongside the school policies listed at the end of this document.

Scope of the Policy

The policy applies to all aspects of school life, including admissions, induction, teaching and learning, curriculum planning, assessment, behaviour, safeguarding, attendance, exclusions or suspensions where applicable, complaints, trips, enrichment, staff recruitment, staff development, appraisal and communication with parents, carers and external agencies.

The school will not tolerate discrimination or prejudicial behaviour by pupils, staff, parents, carers, visitors, contractors or external providers. Concerns will be addressed through the relevant school procedure, including safeguarding, behaviour, complaints, staff conduct or disciplinary processes as appropriate.

Protected Characteristics

All members of the school community have a right to be considered of equal value and to be given equal opportunities regardless of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

The school recognises that pupils and adults may experience disadvantage or discrimination because of more than one characteristic or because of their perceived association with a protected characteristic. The school will respond to these concerns seriously and sensitively.

Forms of Discrimination

The school will take reasonable steps to prevent and respond to:

- direct discrimination, where a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic;
- indirect discrimination, where a rule, policy or practice applies to everyone but places people with a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage and cannot be justified;
- discrimination arising from disability, where a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something arising from their disability;
- failure to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers or visitors;
- harassment related to a protected characteristic;
- victimisation because a person has raised, supported or been involved in an equality concern or complaint.

The school will consider equality implications when introducing or reviewing policies, procedures and practices.

Ethos and Atmosphere

At New Direction School, leaders and staff are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community.

- There should be an openness of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school.
- Pupils are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect.
- Displays around the school should be of high quality and should reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity.
- Physical access to the school is reviewed and improved where reasonably practicable to maximise access for disabled pupils, parents, carers, staff and visitors.
- Provision is made to cater for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through assemblies, tutor time, PSHE, classroom activities and wider enrichment.
- The special educational needs and disabilities of pupils are known to relevant staff, and staff work with pupils to identify and reduce barriers to learning.
- All pupils should access an ambitious curriculum designed to give them maximum opportunities to achieve qualifications, develop confidence and prepare for adulthood.

The school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to respect other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, ability, social background or prior educational experience.

All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves unfairly against others. Parents and carers are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

Teacher enthusiasm, skilled relationships and high-quality adaptive teaching are vital factors in achieving motivation, engagement and good outcomes for all pupils.

Adults in the school provide positive role models in their approach to equality, diversity, inclusion, respectful language and restorative relationships.

The school places a very high priority on provision for special educational needs and disability. We aim to meet pupils learning needs, including those who are more able, through carefully assessed and administered programmes of work.

The school provides an environment in which pupils have fair access to facilities and resources, subject to individual risk assessments, health and safety requirements and any reasonable adjustments required.

Pupils are actively involved in their own learning and are supported to understand their strengths, needs, next steps and aspirations.

A range of teaching methods is used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place for all pupils.

The Taught Curriculum

At New Direction School, planning reflects the school's commitment to equality of opportunity across all subject areas and cross-curricular themes.

- Curriculum planning takes account of pupils differing needs, starting points, EHCP outcomes, personal development and progression routes.
- Pupils are supported to access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that prepares them for further education, employment, independent living and positive participation in society.
- The curriculum promotes respect for diversity, positive relationships, consent, online safety, anti-bullying, anti-racism, anti-discrimination and an understanding of modern Britain.
- Leaders evaluate curriculum implementation and outcomes to ensure that planned learning is delivered and that all groups of pupils have meaningful access to learning.
- Where barriers to curriculum access are identified, leaders and staff consider reasonable adjustments, adaptive teaching, alternative resources, pastoral support or specialist advice.

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within New Direction School is a high priority. These resources should:

- reflect the reality of a diverse society, including diversity of ethnicity, culture, religion and belief, disability, family structure, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and socio-economic background;
- reflect a variety of viewpoints and experiences;
- show positive images of different people in society, including people with disabilities;
- reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a local, national and global context;
- include materials which raise awareness of equality, diversity, rights, responsibilities and respectful relationships;
- be accessible to all members of the school community wherever reasonably practicable and consistent with health and safety;
- avoid explicitly or implicitly racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, disablist, ageist or otherwise discriminatory content unless used appropriately within a planned learning context to teach critical understanding and challenge prejudice.

Language and Communication

New Direction School recognises that respectful language is central to equality, safeguarding and positive relationships. All members of the school community are expected to use language which:

- does not transmit or confirm stereotypes;
- does not offend, humiliate, intimidate or exclude;
- creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified in this policy;
- supports all people to develop self-esteem and a sense of belonging;
- uses respectful, accurate and current terminology when referring to particular groups or individuals;
- takes account of pupils communication needs, including SEND, literacy needs, speech and language needs and English as an additional language.

Incidents involving discriminatory, abusive or prejudicial language will be challenged and recorded in line with this policy, the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Organisation of Learning

When organising groups for activities, consideration is given to the composition of the group to provide a balance appropriate to the activity, the pupils needs, safeguarding, risk assessment and the intended learning outcome.

The school recognises that its local context may not always expose pupils to the full breadth of cultural, religious and social diversity in wider society. The school therefore actively broadens pupils experiences through curriculum content, visitors, educational visits, assemblies, books, discussion, careers education, PSHE, online resources and links with the wider community.

Extra-Curricular Provision

- The school aims to provide fair access to extra-curricular activities, enrichment, trips and wider opportunities.
- Activities should avoid unnecessary gender stereotypes and should encourage pupils to participate according to their interests, strengths and needs.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered so that disabled pupils and pupils with SEND can participate safely and meaningfully.
- External providers, coaches, transport providers and visitors who contribute to extra-curricular activities are expected to act in accordance with the school's safeguarding, behaviour and equality expectations.
- Where an activity cannot be accessed by an individual pupil for safety, medical, safeguarding or risk-assessment reasons, staff will consider alternative provision or reasonable adjustments wherever practicable.

Provision for Bilingual Pupils and Pupils with English as an Additional Language

New Direction School undertakes to make appropriate provision for bilingual pupils and pupils for whom English is an additional language so that they can access the curriculum, safeguarding information, pastoral support and school life.

These pupils may include, but are not limited to, pupils from Traveller communities, refugee or asylum-seeking families, pupils newly arrived in the United Kingdom, and pupils whose home language or dialect differs from standard English.

While pupils are supported to communicate effectively in standard English, the school respects and celebrates home languages and recognises that bilingualism and multilingualism are strengths.

- Staff will seek information about pupils language background and communication needs during admission and induction.
- Resources, visuals, translation tools, interpreting support or simplified communication will be considered where required.
- The school will ensure that language barriers do not prevent pupils or families from raising safeguarding, welfare, SEND or equality concerns.

Special Educational Needs, Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

The school is committed to ensuring that pupils with SEND and disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage because of their needs. The SENCO is Sarah Brown. Leaders and staff work together to identify barriers and make reasonable adjustments where required.

- Staff will use EHCP information, baseline assessments, specialist advice and ongoing observation to plan support and adaptations.

- Reasonable adjustments may include adaptations to teaching, resources, communication, environment, routines, behaviour support, assessment arrangements or access to activities.
- The school will consider auxiliary aids and services where these are reasonable and necessary.
- The school will review accessibility and make improvements where reasonably practicable.
- Equality and SEND information will be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis, in line with data protection and safeguarding requirements.
- The school will work with parents, carers, local authorities and external professionals to support pupils with SEND and disabilities.

Safeguarding, Equality and Child-on-Child Abuse

Equality and safeguarding are closely linked. Discrimination, harassment, bullying, sexual harassment, abuse, exploitation or prejudicial behaviour may indicate a safeguarding concern and must be taken seriously.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Luke Collins. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Hannah Oliver, Emily Smith and Nikki Morris. Safeguarding concerns are recorded on CPOMS. Behaviour, attendance and other relevant pupil information is recorded on Arbor, in line with school procedures.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children, all staff must be alert to the needs of children who may be particularly vulnerable because of SEND, disability, communication needs, mental health needs, experiences of abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, bullying, family circumstances or other contextual factors.

The school will respond to child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, online abuse, discriminatory bullying and harmful sexual behaviour in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. Incidents will be managed in a way that protects children, supports those harmed, addresses harmful behaviour and considers whether referrals to external agencies are required.

Harassment, Bullying and Discriminatory Incidents

It is the duty of the school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour, including unwanted verbal, physical or online attention, unwelcome or offensive remarks, abuse, exclusion, intimidation, ridicule, slurs or suggestions about a person's appearance, character, race, disability, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, age or any other aspect of identity.

The school has clear procedures for dealing with behaviour, bullying and safeguarding concerns. All discriminatory incidents will be:

- taken seriously and responded to promptly;
- recorded accurately on Arbor and/or CPOMS according to the nature of the incident;

- reported to the DSL where there is any safeguarding concern;
- investigated proportionately and fairly;
- communicated to parents or carers where appropriate and safe to do so;
- addressed through restorative work, education, support and sanctions where appropriate;
- monitored by leaders to identify patterns, repeated concerns or wider cultural issues.

The school will not minimise discriminatory language or behaviour as banter. Staff will help pupils understand the impact of words and actions while maintaining a restorative and educational approach wherever appropriate.

Staffing, Safer Recruitment and Staff Development

New Direction School recognises the need for positive role models and the fair distribution of responsibility among staff. The school undertakes to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.

- Recruitment, selection, induction, appraisal, promotion, training, capability and disciplinary procedures will be conducted fairly and in line with equality and safer recruitment requirements.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered for staff with disabilities or health needs.
- Staff are provided with a CPD programme to advance their skills and knowledge. This is reviewed and targets are set through annual appraisal.
- Staff induction and ongoing CPD will include safeguarding, behaviour, SEND, equality, diversity, inclusion, anti-bullying and professional conduct as appropriate to role.
- All staff are expected to model respectful language, challenge discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in their daily practice.

Parents, Carers, Visitors and the Wider Community

New Direction School aims to work in partnership with parents and carers to help all pupils achieve their potential. The school affirms its continuing commitment to reaching out to diverse groups within the immediate community and beyond.

- Parents and carers will be treated respectfully and fairly.
- The school will consider reasonable adjustments to communication, meetings and access arrangements for parents, carers and visitors with disabilities or communication needs.
- The school will not tolerate discriminatory, abusive or intimidating behaviour towards pupils, staff, parents, carers, visitors or external professionals.
- Visitors and external providers are expected to uphold the school's safeguarding, behaviour and equality expectations.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Proprietor, Yvonne Evans, has overall responsibility for ensuring that equality of opportunity is promoted and that this policy is implemented and reviewed.

The Directors, Luke Collins and Hannah Oliver, support strategic oversight of equality, safeguarding, SEND, welfare, curriculum and staffing arrangements.

The Head of Education, Luke Collins, is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy across education provision.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Luke Collins, and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, Hannah Oliver, Emily Smith and Nikki Morris, are responsible for ensuring that equality-related safeguarding concerns are identified, recorded and responded to appropriately.

The SENCO, Sarah Brown, supports leaders and staff to identify SEND-related barriers and plan appropriate provision and reasonable adjustments.

The Head of Student Welfare and Communication, Nikki Morris, supports communication with pupils, parents, carers and external agencies and contributes to welfare and inclusion arrangements.

The Behaviour Coordinator, Colette Rhodes, supports consistent behaviour systems and responses to incidents, including discriminatory behaviour.

All staff are responsible for modelling inclusive practice, challenging discrimination, reporting concerns, supporting pupils and implementing this policy.

Pupils are expected, with support appropriate to their age and needs, to treat others with respect, avoid discriminatory language or behaviour, report concerns and contribute to a safe school community.

Monitoring, Review and Equality Objectives

The Proprietor, Directors, Head of Education and key staff will regularly monitor the operation of this policy and its procedures. Monitoring will include review of relevant evidence, such as:

- behaviour, bullying and discriminatory incident records;
- safeguarding records on CPOMS;
- attendance, absence and punctuality patterns;
- admissions and transitions information;
- curriculum access, accreditation and outcomes;
- SEND provision and reasonable adjustments;
- pupil voice and parent/carers feedback;
- complaints and concerns;
- staff recruitment, induction, CPD and appraisal records;
- records of exclusions, suspensions or significant behaviour interventions, where applicable.

The school will use monitoring information to identify patterns, address barriers, improve practice and set equality priorities or objectives. Due regard will be given to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Proprietor, Head of Education and key staff, or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, school context or inspection requirements.

Linked Policies and Documents

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies and documents:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Accessibility Plan;
- Admissions Policy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Safer Recruitment Policy;
- Curriculum Policy;
- PSHE / RSE Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Data Protection Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy.

References Used for This Policy Review

- Department for Education: Equality Act 2010 advice for schools.
- Department for Education: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- HM Government: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.