

Rothbury First School



Equality and Information Objectives

December 2020

Review Date December 2024

Published equality information about the context of our school

This is our published data about our school population 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.

We are a small first school with 71 (79 including nursery) children on roll. This number fluctuates with 3 nursery intakes over an academic year. The school's rurality means that some children have limited access to services such as sports facilities and the theatre or cinema. There are pockets of disadvantage alongside privilege.

We aim for all of our pupils to perform to their maximum potential, academically, physically and socially in an atmosphere where they can grow and acquire useful skills, values and attitudes.

At the moment most of the pupils speak English as their first language. When we require support for an EAL (English as an Additional Language) pupil, we draw upon the expertise of the County Council's EAL support teacher.

Fewer than 3% of the current cohort of pupils represent minority ethnic groups, compared with 30.7% nationally. There are no significant patterns of under-achievement in our BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) population.

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 raising achievement equally for all groups. We use the funding effectively to offer academic support and guidance, ensuring high quality teaching and learning, from very well qualified staff.

Objectives relating to children eligible for Free School Meals are given a high priority, although financial disadvantage is not a protected characteristic, it is a significant priority for schools.

We represent, discuss and welcome family diversity and the positive aspects of individuality in families. We challenge any perception that family diversity may be uncomfortable for some members of the community to accept; our priority is that every child feels safe and knows that we are committed to our legal duty to keep them safe from discrimination. We represent, discuss and celebrate cultural diversity through diversity projects and reflect the positive aspects of difference. We audit resources and displays, letters home and the language we use for intentional and unconscious bias and aim to develop the capacity of the entire workforce to embody the school's inclusive ethos based on values of responsibility and caring citizenship.

We recognise the growing numbers of gender variant pupils in schools and staff are aware of the issues to be addressed in becoming trans-inclusive. These include practical considerations such as a gender-neutral uniform list (which we have) and emotional and social support for pupils who transition or express gender variance.

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

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

Our school has clear protocols and targeted provision to support these pupils who are on the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) register.

A small minority of pupils have communication issues. We address this through targeted support and staff training. Staff have had training in ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), attachment and emotional literacy.

The school is an accessible building, with flat access, accessible toilets in nursery and the dining room and wheelchair accessible routes.

The school uses data on inequalities of outcome and involvement when setting itself objectives for achievable and measurable improvements. These are outlined in the school's accessibility plan, development plan and at the end of this published information.

We record and report instances of discriminatory language or bullying on the CPOMs system.

All staff recognise the relationship between hate crime and radicalisation or extremism. We recognise the vulnerability of some people in our region to messages about far right extremism, and welcome open discussion and debate with the children in order to dispel myths and misconceptions.

We recognise the limited opportunities many of our children have to experience the wider UK and urban contexts that exist outside Northumberland and prioritise a programme of learning including visits and visitors to address this.

The school only records data on SIMs (School Information Management System) about religion if this is offered by parents. We welcome visits from the local churches. We hope to extend this to cover a broader range of religious leaders and representatives.

Documentation and record-keeping

Our school has a statement of overarching equality policy which is published to the website.

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.

Responsibilities

All members of staff have responsibility for equalities and for meeting equality objectives. All staff take responsibility for anti-bullying good practice.

Staffing

There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff, both teaching and administrative.

Behaviour and safety

There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents. Anti-bullying week is an annual event with assemblies and activities.

Surveys and focus groups show that most pupils feel safe from all kinds of bullying.

Curriculum

Focused attention is paid to the needs of specific groups of pupils with protected characteristics. There is extra or special provision for certain groups, which changes as appropriate.

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

There are activities across the curriculum to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and help them to embody values and develop character traits such as resilience, determination, perseverance and optimism.

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 how they feel about fair and unfair situations.

We consult parents and carers through questionnaires, newsletters, parent consultations. We are able to respond quickly to any concern about perceived inequality, unlawful discrimination or harassment.

Part Two: Objectives

1. Narrowing gaps

Reason for the objective

We have year groups with a number of pupils who have a combination of characteristics and vulnerabilities which contribute to a significant gap in attainment and progress between them and other children. We continue to initiate a range of targeted support which enables us to see the pupils' attainment increase to bring them at least in line with their peers.

Actions and expected impact

The school will annually review and define which targeted support are our most effective in terms of cohort, characteristic and identified need.

This information will be shared among the whole staff and governing body and published on the school website.

The gap will narrow in line with national expectations for all of our disadvantaged pupils, relative to their starting points.

2. Challenging gender stereotypes

Reason for the objective

Some outdated gender stereotypes have recently become evident through the children's use of language and behaviour towards each other.

Actions and expected impact

The school continues to develop teaching and learning resources and interaction with role models. We will work to introduce both boys and girls to role models and situations that challenge misconceptions and stereotypes about gender and aspiration.

Increased awareness of equality and aspiration articulated by staff and pupils

Willingness to challenge discriminatory thoughts and practices.

Increased understanding of the roles and responsibilities experienced by role models who will be drawn from all sectors of the community and include LGBT and minority ethnic people.

Children will articulate an increased awareness of how to get to occupy positions in life and in work that they may previously have perceived to be unattainable.

3. Fostering Good Relations

Reason for the objective

Our audit of Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural education in the curriculum highlighted that we still have more to do if we wish to say that we are fully inclusive of children who have (as many do) increased family diversity and diverse caring arrangements.

Actions and expected impact

A conscious decision to represent and talk openly about more diverse family circumstances (same sex parents, grandparents, foster carers, single parent families) will build resilience and confidence in children who will be able to see that we recognise and celebrate difference.

The impact of this work will be visible in displays, resources, conversations and the ability of our pupils to articulate that family diversity is visible and welcomed in school.

Children will respond confidently and with tolerance when asked 'Do you learn about children who have two mums or two dads?' or 'Is this a safe place to talk about having two mums or two dads?'

4. Understanding wider beliefs

Reason for the objective

We recognise that we may contribute to a relatively monocultural perception of religion, worship and belief through the opportunities we are able to offer for children to have first

hand experiences that represent the wider mosaic of religion, worship and belief that exists in modern Britain.

Actions and expected impact

We plan to extend the learning and interactions children have to give them better preparation for life in modern Britain in contexts more diverse than Rothbury.

We expect children to articulate increased knowledge as well as tolerance, understanding and mutual respect.

Pupils will better understand the concept of 'Britishness' in the wider UK context.