

EQUALITY POLICY	
Reviewed/Amended	May 2026
Ratified by Copleston LAB	22.6.26
Date of next Review	Summer Term 2027
Responsible Officer	Nikita Williamson
Policy Number	SA6

Definition of a Parent

- All biological parents, whether they are married or not.
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

A WHOLE SCHOOL EQUALITY POLICY

1. Vision and Duties

1.1 Our Vision

Copleston High School Academy is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We seek 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.

Our commitment to equality encompasses our whole school community– pupils/students, staff, governors, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies, and includes companies and organisations that we commission to provide services on our behalf.

We believe that the Equality Act 2010 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 of different groups.

We are committed to the development of cohesive communities within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and well-being outcomes.

1.2 Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

We recognise that the Equality Act 2010 protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of sex and gender reassignment. The school will consider requests and needs relating to gender identity sensitively and on a case-by-case basis, in line with current legislation and Department for Education guidance, ensuring that the rights, safety and dignity of all pupils are upheld.

We will ensure that we will identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key principles and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following and probably even additional opportunities, dependent on our current priorities:

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- examination arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare

2. Overall aims of our Equality Policy:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities, sexual orientation and ethnic origins.
- To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy takes account of the content of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, well-being, and material outcomes, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the Human Rights Act, 1998.
- We recognise that discrimination, prejudice and harmful behaviour may also constitute safeguarding concerns, and will be addressed in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

3. Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles

We seek to embed equality of access and opportunity for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life. Our key principles are:-

- **All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they have a disability, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, and whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background.
- **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 disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach, govern and visit our school.
- **We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- **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.
- **We observe good equalities practice 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.
- **Excellence.** We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our whole school community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere.
- **We actively challenge discrimination,** prejudice and stereotyping, including subtle forms such as microaggressions.

4. 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 or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity. Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the **Public Sector Equality Duty** and two **specific duties**.

4.1 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

4.2 Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:-

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty by 6th April 2012 (achieved)
- to publish information showing compliance with the Equality Duty and will publish specific and measurable Equality Objectives at least every four years. Regular updates on progress will be provided.

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

We also produce an Equality Workbook, which is a working document showing the progress that the school is making towards the equality objectives.

Development of the policy

This policy was developed in consultation with pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers. It is part of our commitment to promoting equalities and providing an inclusive school.

When developing this policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010, a variety of advice on best practice including benchmarking against numerous examples of schools equality policies also the Ofsted inspection framework 2015, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

5. Links to other policies and documentation - general duty

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that our responsibilities under the Equality Act are carefully considered when developing our school development plan, self-evaluation review, the school prospectus, school web site, all school policies and newsletters so that we do not unlawfully discriminate either directly or indirectly.

Reinforcement of our commitment to equality and the General Duty is indicated in the following policies:-

Anti-Bullying Policy
 Behaviour for Learning Policy
 EAL Policy
 Home School Agreement Policy
 SEND Policy
 Admissions Policy
 Accessibility Policy -
 Anti-Racism Policy
 Staff Wellbeing Policy
 Safeguarding Policy
 Online Safety Policy
 Staff Code of Conduct

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

We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions, behaviour, rewards, sanctions and exclusions; the way we provide education for all our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services. We ensure that equality considerations are embedded into policy development and review. Where appropriate, Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are undertaken to identify and mitigate potential adverse impacts.

We are aware of the **‘Reasonable Adjustment’** duty for pupils with special educational needs and / or a disability (SEND) – 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.

The Principal 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 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 actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

We raise awareness and educate staff and students about equality and diversity. Specific training programs, assemblies, a half termly newsletter and updates that focus on recent legislative changes and best practices in promoting equality are provided.

All prejudice-related incidents are recorded in line with school systems, monitored by senior leaders, and analysed to identify patterns or trends.

Incidents may be escalated to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead (EDI) where they meet safeguarding thresholds.

7. Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

Copleston High School actively challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality.

There is guidance for staff on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously. This is under constant review to ensure it is easy for staff to submit concerns and managers to look at data.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the Governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We have a designated teacher who takes a lead role on equality.

This includes incidents occurring online, including social media, messaging platforms and gaming environments, in line with the school’s approach to contextual safeguarding.

8. What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different 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 have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils this includes detailed monitoring of inequalities of outcome and participation related to ethnicity, gender and disability. This data will inform school improvement plans and target interventions.

We collect and analyse data:

- on the school population by gender and ethnicity;
- on the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English

We publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage.

We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.

We will review equality data termly at senior leadership level and report patterns and actions to governors.

9. Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate actions to address disadvantages faced by particular groups of pupils with protected characteristics. Targeted and proportionate interventions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives

We actively promote equality through all areas of our curriculum in particular assemblies and our form time programme- The Base and The Apex. We ensure that where possible the curriculum offers appropriate teaching of equality and diversity through such programmes as Copleston Culture.

We will work with external agencies where necessary and continually educate ourselves as an institution about equality and work with others to continue to develop a clear equality message.

10. 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 promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

The curriculum is designed to reflect diverse perspectives, challenge stereotypes and promote understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion across all subject areas.

We send home half termly Inclusion Newsletters.

11. Publishing Equality Objectives

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we **achieve improved outcomes** for the different groups. We produce Equality data analysis which informs our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

Our Equality Objectives for 2024/2025 are:

1. To narrow attainment gaps and improve outcomes for all students across protected characteristics and identified groups through targeted and evidence-informed strategies.
2. To continue to raise awareness and educate staff and students about equality and diversity through regular training, assemblies and school materials and updates.
3. To develop our Student Voice and continue to incorporate an agenda where issues are explored and when required, acted upon.
4. To continue to develop cultural capital knowledge through such routes as Home Learning and Supercurriculum documents (on Satchel). This will also involve developing diversity awareness further through our PSE programme and Copleston Culture in year 9.

12. Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives at least every 4 years and report annually to the Governing Body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

Since July 2016 we have been developing an Equality Workbook to feed back on the progress being made to promote equality at Copleston High School. This will be updated with the MAT feeder primary schools.

13. Roles and Responsibilities

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

13.1 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.

A member of the Governing Body had a lead role regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every Governing Body committee will keep 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. Governors will annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate

the success of the school's Equalities work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

13.2 Principal and Leadership team

The Principal 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.

Senior members of staff have day-to-day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes.

13.3 Teaching and Support Staff

All staff have a professional duty to:

- Challenge discriminatory language and behaviour
- Record and report prejudice-related incidents
- Promote equality through their practice and curriculum delivery
- keep up-to-date with legislation relevant to their work.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure.

13.4 Our pupils/students will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy

13.5 Our parents/carers will:

- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child

13.6 Visitors

All visitors to the school are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy

14. Safeguarding and Equality

The school recognises that discrimination, harassment and prejudice can be safeguarding issues. All staff must be vigilant to:

- Peer-on-peer abuse linked to protected characteristics
- Hate incidents or hate crime
- Online discrimination or harassment

All concerns will be managed in line with the Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

Monitoring and Reviewing the policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, and in response to changes in legislation or guidance.

Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives are available:

- on the school website
- on display for visitors, including parents and carers
- as part of induction for new staff

We ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy, objectives and data through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

Equality data is analysed termly and informs school development planning, staff training and targeted interventions.