Connected Futures Partnership

Authoring our story.

Dorothy Gardner Nursery School
Mary Paterson Nursery School
Tachbrook Nursery School
Essendine Primary School
Hallfield Primary School
Oxford Gardens Primary School
Queen's Park Primary School
Queen's Park Family Hub
Bayswater Children's Centre

Equalities Policy

SEPTEMBER 2026

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Approved by	Executive Headteacher
Approval date	September 2026
Policy lead	Heads of School/Setting Leads
Next review due	September 2027

1. Introduction and commitment

Connected Futures Partnership Federation (CFP) is committed to equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging. We want every child, family, member of staff, governor, volunteer and visitor to be treated with dignity and respect, to participate fully in our community and to be able to flourish.

We regard diversity as a strength. We will challenge discrimination, harassment, victimisation, prejudice, stereotyping and inequality; remove or reduce barriers where we identify them; and create environments in which different identities, backgrounds, experiences and perspectives are respected and visible.

Our approach is rooted in CFP's values of Contribution, Challenge, Inclusivity and Aspiration and in our commitment to 'Authoring our story' together.

2. Scope

This policy sets the federation-wide equality framework for CFP. It applies to the exercise of our functions across our schools and nursery schools and informs good practice across our family hub and children's centre provision, recognising that the precise statutory duties attaching to each service may differ.

It covers pupils and children, parents and carers, employees, applicants for employment, governors, volunteers, contractors, visitors and others who use or engage with CFP services. It should be read alongside each school's published equality information and equality objectives.

3. Legal framework and the Public Sector Equality Duty

CFP welcomes and will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. In exercising relevant public functions, the Governing Board and leaders will have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having 'due regard' means equality considerations must form a real and timely part of decision-making. The weight given to equality will be proportionate to the relevance and potential impact of the decision; it is not a tick-box exercise.

CFP maintained schools will publish information demonstrating compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty at least annually and will publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years. Progress against objectives will be reviewed regularly.

The federation will also have regard, where relevant, to the Human Rights Act 1998, the Children and Families Act 2014, statutory SEND duties, current safeguarding requirements and education legislation.

4. Protected characteristics

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

The way particular provisions of the Equality Act apply differs according to context. For example, age and marriage/civil partnership have a more limited application to school pupils than to employment, and the Public

Sector Equality Duty does not apply identically to every protected characteristic in every function. CFP will therefore apply the law accurately rather than treating every characteristic as legally identical in every situation.

CFP also recognises disadvantage that may not itself be a protected characteristic, including socio-economic disadvantage, care experience, young caring responsibilities, SEND and other vulnerability. We may monitor or take action in relation to such groups where this supports inclusion and improved outcomes.

5. Our approach to equality

5.1 Removing barriers and advancing opportunity

We will consider whether policies, practices, environments or decisions create barriers for particular groups and will take proportionate action where necessary. This includes the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, children, employees and service users where the law requires them.

- access to learning, curriculum and enrichment;
- attendance and participation;
- attainment, progress and wider outcomes;
- behaviour, suspensions and permanent exclusions;
- SEND identification and provision;
- admissions and transitions, where within our responsibility;
- accessibility of information, premises and activities;
- complaints and family engagement;
- recruitment, development and progression of staff; and
- prejudice-related incidents, bullying and safeguarding.

5.2 Equality information and evidence

Leaders will use proportionate evidence to understand experience and outcomes. This may include attainment and attendance information, behaviour and exclusion data, SEND information, staff information where lawful and appropriate, complaints, prejudice-related incidents, stakeholder feedback and relevant local demographic information.

Data will be handled in accordance with data-protection law. Small numbers and sensitive information will not be published where this could identify individuals or create an unacceptable privacy risk.

5.3 Voice and engagement

We will seek and consider the views of children, parents/carers, staff, governors and community partners when this will improve our understanding of barriers or the likely impact of a proposal. Engagement will be proportionate to the decision and will not be treated as a substitute for leadership responsibility or legal compliance.

6. Equality impact and decision-making

There is no general statutory requirement for schools to complete a particular Equality Impact Assessment form. However, decision-makers must be able to demonstrate that relevant equality implications were considered with sufficient rigour and at the right time.

For significant policies, restructures, projects, service changes or decisions with a potentially material equality impact, CFP will normally use the Equality Impact Assessment template at Appendix 2, or another proportionate documented assessment. The assessment should:

- identify which protected groups may be affected and how;
- consider relevant evidence and stakeholder views;
- identify positive opportunities as well as potential disadvantage;
- consider reasonable adjustments, mitigations or alternative approaches;
- record the rationale for the decision and any actions required; and
- provide for review where the actual impact needs to be monitored.

7. Curriculum, teaching and learning

CFP will provide an inclusive curriculum that helps children understand and respect difference, challenges stereotypes and prejudice, and supports positive identity and belonging. Resources, displays, examples and texts should reflect diverse lives and experiences without tokenism.

Schools will teach Relationships Education and, where applicable, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education in accordance with the statutory guidance in force from September 2026. Protected characteristics will be addressed in an age-appropriate way as required by the curriculum and wider legal framework.

Teaching about equality does not remove schools' duties of political impartiality. Where a matter is a political issue, schools will not promote partisan political views and will take reasonably practicable steps to ensure a balanced presentation of opposing views. This does not require schools to present discriminatory conduct as equally valid or prevent them from challenging prejudice and unlawful discrimination.

8. Religion, belief and cultural inclusion

CFP respects freedom of religion and belief, including the right not to hold a religious belief. We will consider reasonable and proportionate requests relating to religious observance, dress and practice while balancing safeguarding, health and safety, education and the rights of others.

The federation's British Values Statement and Ramadan Policy provide additional guidance. No child or adult should be stereotyped or expected to speak on behalf of a whole religion, belief or community.

9. Disability, SEND and accessibility

CFP will not treat disability and SEND as interchangeable. A child may be disabled under the Equality Act without having SEND, may have SEND without meeting the Equality Act definition of disability, or may meet both.

Schools will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required, including considering auxiliary aids and services. Accessibility planning, SEND provision and individual planning will work alongside the Equality Act duties. Expectations will remain ambitious: reasonable adjustment is about removing disadvantage, not lowering aspirations.

10. Preventing and responding to prejudice-related incidents

Prejudice-related incidents and bullying will be taken seriously and responded to in accordance with behaviour and safeguarding procedures. A prejudice-related incident does not need to meet the definition of bullying; a single incident may require action.

A prejudice-related incident is behaviour, language or conduct perceived by the person affected or another person to be motivated by prejudice relating to an identity or characteristic. Staff should record and report incidents through the relevant setting system so that leaders can respond to the individual event and identify patterns.

Responses may include safeguarding action, support for the child or adult affected, education, restorative work where appropriate, proportionate sanctions, family engagement and action to address wider culture or curriculum issues.

11. Equality in employment

CFP is committed to fair and lawful employment practice. Recruitment, selection, pay, access to training, development, promotion, flexible working, performance management and other employment decisions will be made without unlawful discrimination.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered for disabled applicants and employees. We will seek to remove unnecessary barriers to recruitment and progression and will use workforce information lawfully and proportionately to identify issues where appropriate.

12. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Key responsibility
Governing Board	Provide strategic oversight; ensure due regard is given to equality in governance decisions; approve and monitor equality objectives; ensure required equality information is published; challenge leaders about disparities and barriers.
Executive Headteacher	Lead federation implementation; ensure equality is integrated into strategy, policy and decision-making; support Heads of School/setting leaders; report appropriate assurance to governors.
Heads of School / Setting Leads	Implement this policy locally; ensure staff understand expectations; respond to incidents; use evidence to identify barriers; ensure reasonable adjustments and local actions are implemented.
Senior and middle leaders	Build equality considerations into curriculum, provision, staffing and operational decisions; monitor relevant outcomes; challenge stereotypes and discriminatory practice.
All staff	Model inclusive conduct; deliver an inclusive curriculum/service; make agreed adjustments; report prejudice-related incidents and safeguarding concerns; challenge discriminatory language and behaviour appropriately.
Pupils and children	Contribute to an inclusive community, show respect for others and tell a trusted adult about bullying, discrimination or prejudice.
Parents/carers and community partners	Work constructively with CFP, share information relevant to reasonable adjustments or access, and support a culture of dignity and respect.

13. Equality objectives and monitoring

Each CFP maintained school will ensure that the equality information and objectives applying to it are clearly published and kept current. Where objectives are developed on a federation basis, the published material will make clear how they apply to individual schools and how school-level evidence informs them.

Equality objectives will be specific, measurable and informed by evidence. They will be set at least every four years and progress will normally be reviewed annually alongside school improvement and governance processes.

The Governing Board will monitor relevant themes and disparities and seek assurance that leaders are acting where evidence indicates inequality or disadvantage.

14. Complaints and concerns

Concerns about equality, discrimination or the implementation of this policy should be raised promptly with the relevant setting. Complaints will be handled through the CFP Complaints Policy unless another statutory or employment procedure applies. Safeguarding concerns will be dealt with immediately under safeguarding procedures.

Nothing in this policy prevents a person from using any external statutory route available to them.

15. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, federation structure or significant learning requires amendment. The annual policy review is separate from the legal requirement to set equality objectives at least every four years and publish PSED compliance information annually.

16. Related policies and documents

- Equality Objectives and published equality information
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy
- SEND Policy and SEN Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Complaints Policy
- Parent, Carer and Visitor Code of Conduct
- British Values Statement
- Ramadan Policy
- RSHE / Relationships Education Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices

Appendix 1: Key definitions

Term	Meaning
Direct discrimination	Treating a person less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
Discrimination by association	Less favourable treatment because of a person's association with someone who has a protected characteristic, where the relevant Equality Act protection applies.
Discrimination by perception	Less favourable treatment because a person is perceived to have a protected characteristic, whether or not that perception is correct, where the relevant protection applies.
Indirect discrimination	Applying a provision, criterion or practice to everyone that puts, or would put, people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage and cannot be objectively justified where the relevant law permits justification.
Harassment	Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect described in the Equality Act. The precise legal definition and protected characteristics covered vary by context.
Victimisation	Subjecting someone to a detriment because they have done, or are believed may do, a protected act under the Equality Act, such as making an allegation of discrimination or supporting another person's complaint.
Reasonable adjustment	A change or provision required in relevant circumstances to avoid substantial disadvantage to a disabled person. What is reasonable depends on the circumstances.
Prejudice-related incident	An incident perceived by the person affected or another person to be motivated by prejudice relating to identity or characteristic. It may be a single incident and need not meet the definition of bullying.
Equality of opportunity	Removing or reducing disadvantage and taking steps to meet different needs or encourage participation; it does not necessarily mean treating everyone identically.

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Use proportionately for significant policies, projects, restructures or decisions where equality implications may be material.

Policy / project / decision	
Lead person	
Decision-maker	
Date assessment started	
Date decision due	

1. What is being proposed and what is the intended outcome?

_____

_____

2. Who is likely to be affected?

_____

_____

3. What evidence or data is relevant, including stakeholder voice?

_____

_____

4. Which protected characteristics are relevant and what positive or negative impacts have been identified?

_____

_____

5. Are disabled people placed at a substantial disadvantage? What reasonable adjustments have been considered?

_____

_____

6. Could any provision, criterion or practice create indirect disadvantage? If so, what is the legitimate aim and have less disadvantageous alternatives been considered?

_____

_____

7. What actions, mitigations or opportunities to advance equality will be taken?

_____

_____

8. How does the proposal foster good relations or address prejudice, where relevant?

_____

_____

9. What is the final decision and equality rationale?

_____

_____

10. How and when will actual impact be reviewed?

_____

_____

Completed by: _____ Date: _____

Approved / considered by: _____ Date: _____