



## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY FOR PUPILS

September 2026

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of The Newcastle School ('the School').

The School recognises the benefits of having a diverse school **community**, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Pupils will be taught to value and respect others. The School is committed to being an equal opportunities school and is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment ('protected characteristics').

### Aims

The aims of this policy and the School's ethos as a whole is to:

- Communicate the School's commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities for its pupils
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics
- Promote equal treatment for all members of the school **community**
- Create and maintain an open and supportive environment, free from discrimination
- Foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the School
- Comply with the School's equality duties contained in the Equality Act 2010
- Remove or help to overcome barriers for pupils where they already exist
- Enforce that all discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic is unacceptable and will not be tolerated

All members of the school **community** are expected to comply with this policy and always treat others with dignity, respect and kindness.

All parents are expected to support the aims of this policy and the School's ethos of tolerance and respect.

Staff at the School, particularly those working at a management level, have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote the aims and objectives of the School with regard to equal opportunities.

### Regulatory framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's obligations under the:

- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2024](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014.](#)

This policy has regard to the following statutory guidance and advice:

- [Equality Act 2010 explanatory notes](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission Technical Guidance for Schools in England \(2024\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(December 2023\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions policy
- Behaviour management policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Discipline and exclusions policy
- Accessibility plan
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Complaints procedure
- Transgender and gender questioning policy
- Recruitment, selection and disclosure policy and procedure

## **Admissions**

The School treats each application for admission in a fair, open-minded and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School's Admissions policy. Each application will be considered on its merits in accordance with the School's selection criteria based on an applicant's ability and aptitude. The School's aim is to encourage applications from prospective pupils with as diverse a range of background as possible. The School is committed to equal treatment for all and as such accepts applications from, and admits, all prospective pupils irrespective of disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief), social background or special educational needs ('SEN').

Please see the School's Recruitment, selection and disclosure policy and procedure in relation to our approach to staff recruitment and selection.

The School does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special education needs, provided we can offer them the support that they require, cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them. Parents must inform the School when submitting the [Application form](#) of any disabilities and/or special education needs which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and/or ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments may be necessary to ensure that the child is not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other children. The School will not offer a place to a child with disabilities if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School feels that they cannot adequately cater or meet their needs, that the prospective

pupil is not going to be able to meaningfully access the education offered, or that their health and safety, or those of other pupils or staff, may be put at risk.

Bursaries are means tested awards offered to those who meet the School's admission criteria but may otherwise be unable to attend the School due to financial hardship. Details of the School's bursary provision can be obtained by emailing [nsbfees@newcastleschool.co.uk](mailto:nsbfees@newcastleschool.co.uk).

## **Educational services**

The School affords all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services, and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). The School will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The School will:

- Treat all members of the School community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination
- Endeavour to meet the needs of all pupils and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics
- Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with an Education Health Care Plan receive necessary educational and welfare support
- Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds
- Challenge inappropriate and unacceptable discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff
- Encourage pupils to work and play freely and have respect for all other pupils irrespective of any protected characteristic
- Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum and a full range of extra-curricular activities
- Work with parents and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination in School
- Ensure that it reviews, monitors, and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices
- Use the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE to:
  - Promote tolerance of and respect for each other, paying regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
  - Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.
  - Encourage pupils to question and challenge assumptions and stereotypes to better understand discriminatory behaviours and bias.

The School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all its forms (including cyberbullying) is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour management and Anti-bullying policies. The School's Behaviour management and Anti-bullying policies make clear the seriousness of bullying, victimisation and harassment and that appropriate sanctions will be applied to any pupil who displays inappropriate behaviour.

## **Religious belief**

The School is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or with no religion or faith) subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of the School community.

The governing body, through the senior leadership team, 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.

## **Requests for variation in the school uniform**

All pupils are required to wear a uniform with a 'business dress' code operating for Years 12 and 13. The Head will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations to the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the School's policy on health and safety and that such request/s are reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

The School's policy on Transgender and gender questioning is available on request and on the School's website.

Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn to School, parents are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Head, in advance.

## **Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disability**

The School is committed to treating all pupils fairly and in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the School will seek to ensure that pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage, by comparison with pupils who are not disabled. As such, the School has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability which includes:

1. making reasonable adjustments to our policies, criteria and practices (i.e. the way the School does things); and
2. providing auxiliary aids and services (i.e. provision of additional support or assistance).

Where the School is required to consider its reasonable adjustments duty, it will consult with parents and, where appropriate, the pupil, the relevant Head of Support for Learning and (with the parents' consent) any appropriate third party, which may include for example, a medical practitioner or educational psychologist. The School will discuss what reasonable adjustments, if any, the School is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to other pupils. The School will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the School.

The School is not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils or prospective pupils.

Similarly, the School is not required to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with its provision of education and services.

The School has an [Accessibility plan](#) in place which can be found on the school website and a hard copy can be made available upon request. This sets out the School's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Head regularly monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy and reports to the governors on the policy's effectiveness in practice.

### **Breaches of this policy**

Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the School's Behaviour management policy.

If you believe that a pupil has received less favourable treatment as a result of a protected characteristic, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to a pupil's detriment, you are encouraged to raise the matter with the School including through its Complaints procedure as required.

## **POLICY CONTROL - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY FOR PUPILS**

### **Status & Review**

|                                     |                   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Statutory policy or document</b> | Yes               |
| <b>Publish on school website</b>    | Yes               |
| <b>Review frequency</b>             | Every three years |
| <b>Approval date</b>                | September 2026    |
| <b>Review date</b>                  | September 2029    |

### **Version Control**

| <b>Author</b>            | <b>Creation / Revision Date</b> | <b>Version</b> | <b>Status</b>                               |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Executive Assistant (TA) | September 2026                  | 1.0            | Changed school name to The Newcastle School |