

Prior Park Primary School



Published Equality Information (updated 2024) and objectives (2024-2029)

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires schools to consider how their policies and decisions impact people with protected characteristics. Schools must meet the following obligations to comply with the PSED:

- **Consider equality implications:** Consider equality implications before and during the process of developing policies and making decisions.
- **Publish information:** Publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the PSED. Schools that employ 250 or more staff must also publish information on the gender pay gap of their employees.
- **Publish objectives:** Publish equality objectives at least once every four years.
- **Eliminate discrimination:** Have "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- **Advance equality of opportunity:** Have "due regard" to the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.
- **Foster good relations:** Have "due regard" to the need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.
- **Monitor success:** Monitor the success of any equality-related initiative.
- **Record steps:** Record all the steps taken to meet the duty.

About our school and our compliance with the duty

Our school is a small, coastal primary school in a very picturesque historic port and fortified town in the most northerly area of Northumberland. We recognise the challenges we have in being able to live among the protected characteristics and the diversity that makes up the wider context of modern Britain, however we meet this challenge with enthusiasm. We work to embed awareness of diversity, fairness, equality and justice in the curriculum and the wider life of the school, aware of how infrequently some of our pupils will experience life in different contexts and meet people of backgrounds different to their own.

This information gives some examples of the ways in which we meet our duty:

Advance Equality of Opportunity

We teach children about their rights, and the school's values, about respect for one-another and for people who may experience disadvantage, stigma or injustice in a

local, national and global context. The children learn about society as they experience it in Berwick, as well as in regional, national and global contexts.

We celebrate individuality and the unique talents and characteristics of each child. We promote and appreciate British values and celebrate traits such as respect, compassion and consideration for others and an appreciation of diverse viewpoints. Throughout school, we have been intentional in ensuring that representation and visibility of diverse identities are a part of reading, assemblies and discussions. The basis for this is to explore, learn and appreciate the unique, historically rich and changing history and identity of Berwick itself; a contested frontier town between England and Scotland for over 400 years, changing hands more than a dozen times.

Children experience campaigning, advocacy and democratic decision-making during their time with us.

We recognise that the cost-of-living crisis has affected families all over the country, and that rural hardship is sometimes less visible or can be overlooked when immediate surroundings are sought after for affluent holiday homes and attract tourism. We support children who are eligible for Pupil Premium funding and others who experience periods of financial insecurity. We ensure that pupils have access to interventions and learning opportunities that diminish disadvantage and to promote cultural capital; the essential knowledge and reference points that we all need as we move through life from school to social interactions and future job interviews.

Our school has been supported by the Combined Mayoral Authority to participate in the Voice 21 Project, promoting oracy across the curriculum as part of the work to diminish the effects of disadvantage.

To access enrichment such as some sporting or cultural activities, children must travel considerable distances from Berwick, so we try to ensure that we help all children to develop cultural capital as a matter of equality and social justice through a rich and vibrant programme of experiences during their time at school. This includes a pantomime visit, funded by the PTA, an exploration of the river Tweed by boat and visits to the beach, which many of our children rarely see, although it is very close.

We collaborate with and support community and voluntary partners, to ensure that families are supported and know how to access help with parenting, relationships, mental health, and financial difficulties as well as access to integrated services. A key partner in the life of the school is local charity Choices 4 Growth, who support communities with counselling, play therapy and emotional support. Based in our former caretaker's house, they support our families (toddler group) and pupils for two days of the week. The impact of this work is vital; it teaches our children skills which strengthen and build resilience, provide coping skills, a listening ear, friendship strategies and most of all it reinforces the message that it's OK to ask for help when you are struggling.

Eliminate discrimination

We promote gender equality and challenge gender stereotypes. We ensure that our resources and teaching materials provide equal validation of the contributions of

women and men, people of diverse faiths, abilities and backgrounds to life in modern Britain.

Our school uniform is flexible and affordable and the guidance does not have any rigid expectations that would be discriminatory due to reasons such as religion or belief, sex, disability, sensory needs or gender identity.

We consult with children and families when setting objectives for achievable and measurable objectives which will make the school more accessible for children with disabilities. They are outlined in more detail in the school's accessibility plan.

We record and address any instances of discriminatory language, even when a child has been unaware of the impact of the language they have used. As a school we learn about fostering good relations and challenging discrimination in a practical context as children learn to navigate friendships, feelings and being confident to speak to a trusted adult about concerns.

Staff and governors have completed training and have awareness of how to recognise a person vulnerable to radicalisation and to make a referral.

The school's anti-bullying policy is on the web site, and we know from pupil voice activities that pupils feel safe and supported at Tweedmouth Prior Park.

Religious and faith-based respect and understanding is promoted by our school's RE curriculum.

Foster good relations

We have very few children who speak community languages other than English or who are from Global Majority heritage backgrounds. This presents challenges in representing diversity in ways that are neither stereotypical nor tokenistic and in helping us to prepare children to be in and expect contexts where the true cultural, ethnic and religious diversity of the wider UK are visible and routine. We achieve this through a well-planned curriculum, discussions, critical thinking skills and enquiry-based learning. We also welcome visitors and role models to our school and by ensuring that we try to plan a well-rounded programme of visits and learning opportunities when the cost of transport will permit.

When it is supplied as part of the admission process, we do record religion and belief and can be accordingly sensitive, respectful and inclusive towards diverse faiths and beliefs.

In accordance with the 2019 RSHE statutory guidance we represent, discuss and welcome family diversity. We challenge any perception that family diversity is an uncomfortable or age-inappropriate concept for children; we are committed to discharging our legal duty to keep LGBT people safe from discrimination and representing the communities and contexts our children know and respect.

Published Objectives 2024-29:

Advance Equality of Opportunity: Building a culture of resilience in the school community

People in the most deprived communities in Northumberland have shorter healthy lives than those in our least deprived.

A plan has been developed to reduce inequalities to enable people to live healthy, happy lives for longer.

One of the ways in which we recognise the role we can play in supporting healthy lifestyles is to support the emotional health and wellbeing of the children and their families. With over 30% of families now eligible for Free School Meals, there is anxiety and concern about issues such as the cost of living, problems for children in socialising, making and sustaining friendships, worrying and coping with the ups and downs of life. Many of the children in our school need support to develop resilience, coping strategies, optimism, friendships and skills to support them to meet challenges without being overcome by them and to see emotional health and wellbeing to avoid and overcome being restricted by mental health challenges.

What we will do

- We will continue to fund Choices 4 Growth counsellors to continue to make 2 days per week of counselling and therapeutic support available for children (and their families via the toddler drop in).
- Continue to address the developmental delays affecting children who join with limited school readiness, so that every child who joins our school can enjoy the best possible start in life.
- Continue to help children to develop strategies to assist them when they feel overwhelmed and unable to progress, building independence and resilience.
- Increase our awareness of signposting and resources for families experiencing periods of insecurity or hardship, so that children can thrive and our relationships with them and their families can flourish.

Fostering good relations: Preparation for life in modern Britain

Children in our school community are respectful and kind, but we acknowledge that they do have fewer opportunities to experience life in modern Britain alongside multi-faith or linguistically and culturally diverse neighbours due to the location and context of Berwick.

What we will do:

- We rely on excellent, professionally developed resources such as Picture News and Newsround to bring concepts such as misinformation, racial tensions, disability equality or British Values into learning contexts that promote critical thinking and help children to articulate concepts of equality, equity and social justice.

- We will continuously review our curriculum to ensure representation of diverse people, people from marginalised groups and contexts that reflect the identities that make up modern Britain.
- We will always use local heritage, culture and identity as a starting point to define and contextualise who we are, and where we fit in the wider picture of British life.
- We recognise our responsibility to broaden children's experiences of advocacy, protected characteristics, discussing inequality, the role of the bystander, how democracy affects us in a global, national and local context and safe and respectful relationships. We will do this in age-appropriate ways through the curriculum and by offering opportunities for children to become engaged as representatives and advocates.

What we will do:

Continue to develop and extend the curriculum and the school-based enrichment experiences to prepare our children for their next steps at secondary or middle school, and for adult life.

Continue to strengthen the School Council and Green Teams as opportunities for every child in school to be able to participate in activities such as

- Auditing sustainability
- Campaigning for change
- Working with partners and support networks (climate change team, caretaker)
- Developing action plans

Work in partnership with the Schools Library Service to ensure that children have access to reading resources which represent and broaden their experiences of the world around them.