# Fortitude School 2026/27

# Whole School Equality, Diversity and Protected Characteristics Policy and Procedures

| | |
|---|---|
| Date Of Policy : | September 2026 |
| Next Review Date: | July 2027 |
| Frequency of Policy Review: | Annually |
| Policy Owner: | Head/Directors/Chair of Governors |
| List of Connected Policies: | Health and Safety, Safeguarding curriculum, SEND Policy, Behaviour and Relationships policy |

**Legal framework**

Fortitude School recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to the nine characteristics protected in law:

Age
Sex
Race
Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Pregnancy and Maternity
Gender reassignment
Disability 8. Sexual Orientation
Religion or belief.




**PROMOTING THE NINE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS:**

The Equality Act became law in 2010. It covers everyone in Britain and protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Everyone in Britain is protected. This is because the Equality Act protects people against discrimination because of the 'protected characteristics' that we all have.

Under the Equality Act you are protected from discrimination:

When you are in the workplace
When you use public services like healthcare (for example, visiting your doctor or local hospital) or education (for example, at your school or college)
When you use businesses and other organisations that provide services and goods
(like shops, restaurants, and cinemas)
When you use transport
When you join a club or association (for example, your local football club)
When you have contact with public bodies like your local council or government departments

The 9 Protected Characteristics are actively promoted in school through:
Our school ethos, curriculum policies, SDP, and SEF
Our School 3Cs Values
PSHE – Jigsaw curriculum
Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE)
Our school behaviour policy
Conscious role modelling by all adults in the school community
Active engagement and communication with parents and carers
Celebration Assemblies
British Values, SMSC and Equality and Diversity throughout our curriculum
Discussion within curriculum subjects, taking a cross-curricular approach
Promoting articulation by building appropriate language and a coherent vocabulary
Religious Education (RE) lessons, RSE lessons
Sporting, Art and Cultural Events
Pupil Voice and Staff Voice
Educational visits
Rich Cultural Capital opportunities for every child
Real-life learning outside the classroom including our Farm, Forest School, and allotment.
Developing strong links with our local and wider communities

Embedding Protected Characteristics into the whole school ethos promotes:
Self-esteem, self-knowledge and self-confidence
Respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process
Acceptance of responsibility for their own behaviour
Respect for their own and other cultures

Understanding of how they can contribute positively to school and home life and to the lives of those living and working in the locality and further afield
An understanding of Equality, Human Rights and Protected Characteristics
An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
An appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety
An understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law
An acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
An understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination

In addition, to all of the above, we also include economic disadvantage within this policy, recognising that this has one of the most significant impacts on the achievement of children and young people.

At Fortitude School, we welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion. We also recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

**Guiding principles**

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, Fortitude School is guided by nine principles:
Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:
whether or not they are disabled
whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
whatever their gender and gender identity
whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
whatever their sexual identity
whatever their economic or social background.

We therefore act to ensure that each and every member of the school community:

experiences equality of opportunity
feels a full and respected member of the school community
has high expectations of themselves, their peers, staff, and others with regard to fair treatment
develops an understanding of race, ethnicity and multiculturalism alongside an appreciation of their importance in Britain today
develops an understanding and appreciation of disability and the contribution of disabled people in the community and UK
develops an awareness of conscious and unwitting racism alongside the skills and confidence to challenge instances of racist behaviour, language and attitudes
develops an awareness that disability can be both seen or unseen and that people with learning and other disabilities (eg autism, Asperger's syndrome) have the same rights to reasonable and appropriate adjustments as those with more obvious needs.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
religion, belief or faith background
sexual identity
economic or social disadvantage.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:
whether or not they are disabled
whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:
disabled and non-disabled people
people of different ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds ·
girls and boys, women and men.
Principle 6: We aim to consult and involve widely

We endeavour to engage with a range of groups and individuals to 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 aim to consult and involve:
disabled people as well as non-disabled
people from a range of ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds ·
both women and men, and girls and boys.
people in heterosexual and same sex relationships.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

disabled people as well as non-disabled
people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds
both women and men, girls and boys
people in heterosexual and same sex relationships

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7)
The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.
We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

The Fortitude Curriculum

As part of our work to promote equality, we aim to ensure that within our educational provision children are offered opportunities to:
Understand and celebrate diversity in all its forms;
Learn about racial equality in a variety of curriculum areas (e.g. PHSCE, Science, RE, Art and English);
Develop an understanding of global citizenship;
Understand the power of language particularly relating to verbal abuse due to race, disability, sexual orientation or social standing;
Develop an understanding of their rights, the rights of others, and their responsibilities to each other;
Develop an understanding and appreciation of other religious beliefs and cultures;
Recognise and challenge prejudice and discriminating attitudes and behaviour;
Develop emotionally and intellectually with the personal qualities and attributes required to make a successful life in a diverse society.

Ethos and organisation

We ensure the principles listed in paragraph 4 above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
teaching styles and strategies
admissions and attendance
staff recruitment, retention and professional development
care, guidance and support
behaviour, discipline and exclusions

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:
prejudices around disability and special educational needs
prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Roles and responsibilities

The Fortitude School **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.

The Chair of the **governing body** has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

The **headteacher** 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.

**Team Leaders** have day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

The leadership team is responsible for:
coordinating equality work within staff teams
dealing with reported incidents of racism or harassment and reporting these in detail to the Headteacher
monitoring the progress of minority group children, including those on free school meals and from less economically affluent families
allocating resources fairly and equitably, including recognising that some children may require more than others for an equal and fair chance to enjoy and achieve

**All staff** are expected to:

promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 above
support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

**All Visitors** are expected to be aware of, and comply with, the school's equality policy

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and members of the governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

All staff, members of the governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff development and training

We ensure that all Fortitude staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the policy

We will consider every breach of the policy in the light of the particular circumstances and, if pupils are involved, take into account their age and the nature of the breach. We will call on support from the Local Authority, the Police or other agencies as appropriate.

Monitoring and review

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to free school meals, disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

The governing body will endeavour to ensure that all relevant policies reflect the school's commitment to the principles of equality and that this commitment is reflected clearly in all its work.

All policies, functions and strategies are regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in promoting equality.

As further equality requirements come into force policies, functions and strategies will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in fulfilling the requirements of new legislation.

Outcomes of monitoring and assessment will be reported to the governing body and other key partners. Members of the school community will be kept informed of Equality and Diversity initiatives being undertaken.