

Bethany School Equality Policy

May 2026

Bethany School seeks to foster a warm, welcoming and respectful environment which is free from discrimination and inequality. This policy aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief. We will provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and seek to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community. We want to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated.

We believe God's word teaches that all people are created equal and every single person can be a child of God, receiving the full inheritance of heaven. For example "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3v28. We look to the Bible to learn how to love and serve everyone no matter what their age, colour, ethnicity, gender or nationality as in James 2v8-9 "...You shall love your neighbour as yourself....and if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers".

This policy is written in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK](#) and the employment rights act 1996 [Factsheet: Employment Rights Act 2025 – Overview - GOV.UK](#) which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, giving due regard to groups with the 'protected characteristics' set out in the equality act. These are: sex, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership. [Workforce equalities requirements in schools and colleges: an outline - GOV.UK](#)

Bethany School will carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation within this Act.

Unlawful behaviour under the equality act as outlined below will not be tolerated.

Direct discrimination - intentionally treating someone less favourably due to a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination - where a policy or practice has a disproportionate impact on a group sharing a protected characteristic.

Harassment - unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Under the legal definition, harassment only covers disability, race, sex or pregnancy and maternity.

Sexual harassment - unwanted conduct of a sexual nature.

Victimisation - retaliating against someone for taking action under the Equality Act.

Discrimination arising from disability - treating someone unfavourably because of something arising from their disability

Roles and Responsibilities

We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so that they are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community. Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school's ethos and values.

All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's equal opportunities policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

Our Governing Body will

- ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation and have regard to this guidance, ensuring recruitment, policies, procedures and training in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times. (Keeping Children Safe in Education)
- Monitor and review the working of this policy annually and the equality objectives every four years

- Support the Headteacher in implementing necessary actions
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including understanding obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (Keeping Children Safe in Education)

Our Headteacher will:

- Have overall responsibility for the equality policy
- Ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by the governing body (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood, and followed by all staff Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Oversee effective implementation
- Ensure staff have access to appropriate training
- Monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body on its effectiveness

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- Support implementation of the policy
- Investigate patterns in exclusion and attendance data
- Monitor the progress of different student groups
- Address incidents of harassment and bullying

All Staff will

- Challenge stereotypes and promote equality
- Ensure resources represent diverse groups
- Adapt teaching strategies for variations in learning, ensuring that time, attention, opportunities and resources are given equally to all groups
- Engage all students in learning, encouraging them to work and play freely with others of both sexes and those with disabilities or other protected characteristics.
- Report concerns following safeguarding procedure

Bethany school will employ strategies to ensure that the cross-curricular dimension of equal opportunity permeates all of the life and work of the school. This includes

- ensuring that seating and grouping arrangements are not based on criteria which does not support equality.
- enabling children of both sexes have equal opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum.
- Boys and girls are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.
- Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of gender and racial bias in both our teaching and learning materials and our teaching styles
- Materials are carefully vetted for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid or explain the problems of stereotypes and bias
- Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to all groups
- All children are encouraged to work and play freely with others of both sexes and all ages
- Opportunities are given for children to work with teaching and support staff of both sexes where possible
- Teaching and other groupings, such as dining table arrangements and classroom seating are organised on the basis of criteria other than gender, for example, age, ability, friendship
- Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving / delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children.
- Discipline procedures - notably rewards and corrective measures - are the same for both sexes and all groups
- Our school uniform code reflects equality of opportunity for all children
- Children and all staff are encouraged to value each other and build up and maintain cooperative working relationships both within school and in the community, such relationships being based on mutual respect for each other

- Any differences, which arise inside or outside the classroom, are dealt with sensitively and are discussed with the children.

Students are expected to:

- Act in accordance with this policy
- Report incidents of discrimination or bullying
- Respect difference and diversity

Reasonable Adjustments

Under the Equality Act 2010, we must make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils, staff and parents/carers with disabilities. This duty is anticipatory, which means we must think in advance about what people with a range of impairments might reasonably need and make adjustments accordingly.

When deciding what adjustments are reasonable, we consider:

- Our resources and availability of financial assistance
- The effectiveness of the adjustment in overcoming the substantial disadvantage experienced by a pupil with a disability
- The effect of the disability on the individual
- Health and safety requirements
- The interests of other pupils
- The cost of an adjustment will be considered when deciding if it is reasonable. However, it is unlawful to charge a pupil for a reasonable adjustment. (The Key Leaders)

Our accessibility plan sets out how we will:

- Increase the extent to which pupils with disabilities can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment to enable pupils with disabilities to take better advantage of education and services
- Improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with disabilities (The Key Leaders)

Public Sector Equality Duty

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), we must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it (The Key Leaders)

The PSED places a general duty on schools to have, in the exercise of their functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The duty applies to all protected characteristics and means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, specific consideration must be given to the equality implications.

We will:

- Prepare and publish equality objectives in the accessibility plan (reviewed every four years)
- Maintain records of our decision-making processes

Equality for Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation protecting staff from discrimination based on all protected characteristics. Unlike pupils, staff are protected under all the protected characteristics including age and marriage (The Key Leaders)

Our recruitment and staffing processes ensure no discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, dismissals, training and employment practices.

No one receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of disability or special needs.

In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria.

For staff with disabilities, we will make reasonable adjustments necessary to prevent them being at a disadvantage compared to others. We involve staff members in working out reasonable adjustments as they know best about what support they need.

We make efforts to ensure workforce diversity reflects our local community and wider society.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made. (Keeping Children Safe in Education)

We ensure the safety and well-being of staff and take incidents of harassment and discrimination seriously, recognising that staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

Equality for Parents/Carers

In some circumstances, a school is regarded as a 'service provider' under part 3 of the Equality Act, so we have a duty to make accommodations for the parents of pupils if those parents have a disability. For example, if a parent is deaf, our school would have a duty to provide a sign language interpreter for parents' evenings. (The Key Leaders)

As with adjustments for pupils and staff, what is 'reasonable' will depend on the context of our school and what we're capable of providing. The responsibility for making reasonable adjustments lies with the school. (The Key Leaders)

Responding to Hate Incidents and Prejudice-Based Bullying

A racist incident is "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person." [Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online - GOV.UK](#) We take all hate incidents and prejudice-based bullying seriously and will not tolerate behaviour driven by negative assumptions or stereotypes.

We will report bullying incidents to:

- The local authority's children's social care team (and police if appropriate) if we think the incident constitutes a child protection concern
- The police if the incident could be a criminal offence or pose a serious threat

We record all hate incidents and prejudice-based bullying to identify trends and patterns, enabling us to provide appropriate responses for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators, and education for our community.

Our behaviour and safeguarding policy addresses child-on-child abuse, recognising that while it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

This includes:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Physical abuse
- Sharing of nude and semi-nude images

Safeguarding and Equality

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, we must give specific consideration to equality implications, including the need to eliminate unlawful behaviours such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, misogyny/misandry and racism. Good record-keeping and monitoring of all forms of abuse and harassment is essential.

We recognise that behaviour issues can indicate safeguarding concerns. Certain groups face greater barriers to safeguarding needs being disclosed, recognised and addressed. We ensure safeguarding support is offered equally to all groups of pupils.

When using reasonable force in response to risks involving children with SEND, mental health problems or medical conditions, we carefully recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups and consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010, including making reasonable adjustments and our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Policy Adopted by Governors on: May 2026

Policy Due for Review on: 2029