WHITE HOUSE SCHOOL

Equality, Inclusion & Diversity Policy including our Equality Objectives

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CAVENDISH EDUCATION

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1. Context

The White House School is an independent specialist school for children and young people with additional and complex needs. We are part of Cavendish Education and are committed to transforming lives through highly personalised education, therapeutic support and ambitious teaching.

Our vision is **"Making Learning Possible Again."** We create a school where pupils feel safe, belong, achieve and thrive. Through removing barriers to learning, rebuilding confidence and fostering positive relationships, we empower every pupil to realise their potential and prepare for successful and fulfilling lives beyond school.

Our mission is to provide a nurturing, ambitious and mindful education that supports both academic progress and personal growth. Guided by our whole-school ethos of **Healthy Minds, Happy Hearts**, we create the conditions for every pupil to become **Ready to Learn and Prepared for Life**.

Everything we do is underpinned by our core values:

- **Ambition** – developing curiosity, courage and aspiration.
- **Resilience** – developing confidence, character and perseverance.
- **Community** – demonstrating kindness, integrity and respect.

We believe that pupils thrive when they feel safe, understood and valued. Our culture is built upon strong relationships, high expectations and a commitment to seeing the strengths and potential in every child. We are deeply nurturing without lowering expectations and remain unashamedly ambitious for every pupil.

Our practice is informed by the National Autistic Society's **SPELL Framework**, which promotes:

- Structure and predictability;
- Positive approaches and expectations;
- Empathy and understanding;
- Low arousal environments;
- Strong links between school, home and professionals.

Alongside this, we adopt a trauma-informed, relational and therapeutic approach across all aspects of school life. We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and believe that pupils do well when they can. Our role is to understand the barriers they face and provide the support, strategies and relationships that enable them to succeed.

At The White House School:

- Every interaction is viewed as an intervention.
- Every adult is an emotionally available adult.
- Relationships come first.
- Emotional readiness is the foundation for learning.

We support pupils to develop emotional regulation, communication, independence and social understanding through consistent relational practice, personalised support and integrated therapeutic approaches. Emotional regulation is explicitly taught through co-regulation, sensory support, movement opportunities and personalised regulation strategies. Pupils are encouraged to understand themselves, develop resilience and build the skills needed to navigate life successfully.

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do. We recognise the additional vulnerabilities that many pupils with special educational needs may experience and maintain a culture of vigilance, care and advocacy. We place the child at the centre of decision-making, listen to pupil voice in all its forms and work closely with families and external agencies to promote safety, wellbeing and positive outcomes.

Through ambitious and adapted teaching, meaningful relationships, therapeutic support and a culture of belonging, we help pupils feel safe, build confidence, achieve success and thrive both in school and beyond.

2. Aims

2.1 The aims of this policy and the school's ethos as a whole are to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics

(b) eliminate all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that an individual has a learning difficulty or special educational need, or because English is an additional language

(c) promote equality of opportunity for all members of the school community

(d) comply with the school's equality obligations in the Equality Act 2010

(e) provide a secure environment in which all our children can thrive and achieve all of the outcomes of Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026)

(f) provide a learning environment where all individuals through the school policies feel valued and feel they have a sense of belonging

(g) prepare students for life in a diverse and inclusive society in which everyone can take their place in the local, regional, national and

international community

(h) include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity

(i) provide and promote positive information about the diversity of UK society

(j) actively challenge discrimination and ensure that all members of the school community learn from these experiences

(k) embed inclusion through all our activities

2.2 To achieve these aims, the school:

(a) involves, where reasonably practicable, all members of the school community in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures

(b) publishes school policies to the school community as appropriate

(c) collects and analyses data (such as admissions data and examination results) to monitor any potential disadvantage amongst the student body

(d) helps to overcome any potential barriers to learning by providing for students' diverse needs and learning styles including any learning support needs and/or disabilities a student may have

2.3 The school ethos states that:

*At The White House School, our whole-school ethos of **Healthy Minds, Happy Hearts** sits at the centre of everything we do. Within our nurturing environment, we actively promote our core values of **ambition, resilience and community**, ensuring that pupils feel safe, understood and valued so they can grow in confidence both academically and personally.*

2.4 The school aims to promote inclusion and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life and with key partners such as parents and other schools. The school seeks to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. The school takes seriously its contribution towards community cohesion.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The **Equality Act 2010**, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- The **Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011**, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on **Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools.**

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The school Senior Leadership Team under Cavendish Education have responsibility for ensuring that the school operates within the legal framework for equality and for implementing the policy throughout the school.

Each member of the school community is responsible for being alert to and challenging discrimination; embracing diversity; respecting different faiths and beliefs; and upholding equality of opportunity for all.

Each member of staff is responsible to have regard to this policy and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in Section 9, our objectives.

5. Understanding discrimination

Discrimination can take the following forms, including:

(a) Direct Discrimination - This occurs where a person is treated less favourably than others because of their (or a family member's) actual or perceived protected characteristic.

(b) Indirect Discrimination - This occurs by applying a provision, criterion or practice, which disadvantages people on the grounds of a protected characteristic and which cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

(c) Victimisation - This occurs where an individual has exercised their rights under equality legislation (or has indicated that they intend to do so) and is treated less favourably as a direct result. It applies equally

to a person who is supporting (or indicates that they intend to support) another person who is exercising their rights under the legislation.

(d) Harassment – This is defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose OR effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating a hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

(e) Disability Discrimination - This includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

6. Eliminating discrimination

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every year by completing the Educare 'Equality and Diversity' online course.

The senior leadership team regularly monitor equality issues and place inclusion at the center of all school decisions.

We do not discriminate on any of the characteristics in the Equality Act 2010

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage and civil partnerships

7. Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with

disabilities)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (including provision at after school clubs)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Analyse data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups to appropriate persons
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular, protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils.

8. Fostering good relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with any potential tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist

knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

9.Equality objectives

Objective 1

Ensure every pupil has consistent access to an effective means of communication so they can express preferences, make choices and participate in school life.

Why we have chosen this objective: We are committed to removing barriers to participation, communication, learning and wellbeing. Many of our pupils have complex needs and some of our pupils are non-verbal but all our pupils benefit from being able to communicate effectively when their anxiety is heightened.

Success measure:

- All pupils have a shared communication profile (e.g. AAC, PECS, signing, symbols, objects of reference, emotional regulation toolbox).
- Staff receive training in each pupil's preferred communication methods.
- Evidence from learning and environment monitoring quality assurance observations and EHCP reviews show increased pupil participation in learning and decision-making.
- Parents report improved communication between home and school.

Objective 2

Develop and strengthen the school's family outreach programme to ensure all families can access information, services and support through communication that is accessible, responsive and tailored to their individual needs, enabling them to participate fully in their child's education.

Why we have chosen this objective: Families have communicated that they are keen to adopt the communication aids we use at school to best support their child at home and require additional support to manage their child's additional needs at home.

Success measure:

- To implement the school's Outreach Implementation Strategy plan.

- Review and adapt school communications to meet the diverse needs of families, including the use of accessible formats, translation where appropriate, and plain English.
- Increase engagement with families who have previously experienced barriers to participation through targeted outreach and personalised support.
- Provide regular opportunities for families to access advice, training and signposting to relevant services.
- Gather and act upon parent and carer feedback to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of communication and outreach.
- Show increased participation in school events, reviews and family support initiatives across all groups of families.

10. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis to evaluate its effectiveness and ensure appropriate steps can be taken to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

This policy is usually reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the aims of the policy are carried out in accordance with the school's equality obligations and new objectives written at least every 4 years.

11. Links with other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Risk Assessment
- School Development Plan

Approval & Policy Review

This Policy has been reviewed and approved by:

Policy Approver(s)	Elle Vinall - Headteacher
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Revision History

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3	Updated New equality objectives written	Tracey Lockwood	August 2026