Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School

Equality Policy

Date: December 2025

Signed:

Nicola O'Connell – Headteacher

Jane Bisseker – Chair of Governors

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School is dedicated to ensuring that provision is equitable throughout our school community. We aim to achieve this by:

- Promoting cultural development and understanding through varied experiences in and beyond school life.
- Ensuring the curriculum provides meaningful opportunities to explore equality and diversity.
- Supporting all children so that every pupil makes progress, including those in vulnerable groups.
- Monitoring and responding quickly to any concerns where prejudice may be involved.
- Ensuring our environment is accessible to pupils, staff and visitors.
- Publishing equality objectives on our website and reviewing them regularly.

PURPOSE

This policy sets out how our school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and outlines our commitment to inclusion.

We strive to ensure equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers, regardless of:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex (defined by law as biological sex)
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Gender Reassignment (as defined by the Equality Act 2010)

We follow the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Code of Practice and statutory definitions.

We are committed to fostering a culture where everyone feels valued, safe and able to participate fully in school life. Achievement is monitored carefully by sex, ethnicity, and disability so teaching and support can be tailored effectively.

We challenge discrimination and bullying in all forms and celebrate the diversity that strengthens our community.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY (PSED)

In line with the PSED, we will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster positive relations between different groups.
- We demonstrate compliance by publishing equality information and objectives, maintaining this policy, and monitoring progress.

MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY INTO POLICY AND PRACTICE

Teaching and Learning

- We aim to give all pupils the opportunity to succeed by:
- Using contextual data to plan support for individuals and groups.
- Monitoring achievement by sex, ethnicity and disability, reducing gaps where they appear.
- Planning learning that considers all pupils' needs and sets high expectations.
- Providing equal access to learning and preparing children for life in a diverse society.
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the school and wider community.
- Promoting values that challenge stereotypes and prejudice.
- Offering opportunities to appreciate and celebrate cultural diversity.
- Involving parents/carers in their child's learning.
- Encouraging age-appropriate discussions on fairness and respect.
- Using inclusive teaching approaches adapted for infant learners.
- Working with our SENCo and following the SEND Code of Practice.

ADMISSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

Admissions follow Hertfordshire Council procedures. Exclusions follow statutory guidance and ensure equality for all pupils.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies
- SEND Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Online Safety Policy

Together, these ensure pupils feel safe, respected and included.

REPORTING AND RECORDING INCIDENTS

All discriminatory, prejudicial, racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, sexist or disability-related incidents are recorded. Patterns are monitored and reported termly to the governing body. All incidents are addressed quickly, fairly and sensitively.

POSITIVE ACTION

Where appropriate and proportionate, the school may take positive action to support individuals or groups experiencing disadvantage, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF

We are committed to equal opportunities in staff recruitment, retention and development.

Actions include:

- Monitoring recruitment, retention and workplace culture.
- Providing CPD for all staff.
- Considering equality during staffing restructures.
- Providing induction and refresher equality training.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

Governors will:

- Ensure the school is inclusive and responsive to pupils' needs.
- Monitor equality in employment and admissions.
- Ensure accessibility for disabled people.
- Receive termly reports on equality-related incidents.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Implement the policy across the school.
- Ensure staff understand and follow it.
- Ensure appointment panels follow equality guidance.

- Address discrimination seriously and promptly.

All Staff

All staff are expected to:

- Treat pupils and colleagues fairly and respectfully.
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- Use resources that promote positive, inclusive images.
- Follow reporting procedures.
- Attend equality training.

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers should:

- Treat school staff, pupils and other families with respect.
- Support the school's commitment to equality and inclusion.
- Model inclusive behaviour.

Pupil Voice

Infant pupils are supported to express their views through:

- Strong adult–child relationships
- Zones of Regulation "welcome pots"
- Circle time
- Pupil voice activities

UPDATED SECTIONS (2025 RULING COMPLIANCE)

Protected Characteristics (Revised)

We recognise the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex (based on biological sex, as clarified by the Supreme Court 2025)
- Sexual Orientation

- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Gender Reassignment

Clarification following the 2025 ruling:

The term sex refers to biological sex, including for any single-sex arrangements (e.g., toilets, changing areas, sex-specific safeguarding requirements).

This does not remove protections for pupils protected under gender reassignment, who must not be discriminated against or harassed.

Gender Reassignment (Updated for infant context)

Some young children may express preferences in name, clothing or identity as part of developing their sense of self.

Under the Equality Act 2010:

Pupils are protected from discrimination, bullying or harassment if they are exploring or expressing a gender transition, even in a very early social or personal form.

- Staff will always respond sensitively, prioritising wellbeing and safeguarding.
- Parents/carers will be involved and supported.
- No medical intervention is relevant or expected at this age.
- Single-Sex Provisions (New Section)
- In line with the Equality Act 2010 and the 2025 Supreme Court ruling:
- Any single-sex facilities (e.g., toilets, changing areas) are organised by biological sex.

Private or individual facilities will always be available where needed to ensure dignity and comfort for any pupil.

No child will be disadvantaged, excluded or treated less favourably because they are exploring gender or protected under gender reassignment.

This approach balances legal compliance, safeguarding and child-centred pastoral care.

REVIEW OF PROGRESS AND IMPACT

This policy is reviewed annually. Equality information is published yearly. Pupil progress data (by sex, ethnicity and disability) is analysed to identify and address gaps.