

Grange View C.E First School

Published Equality information about the context of our school

Equality objectives for the period 2021-2025

This is our published information (February 2024) about our school population and the ways in which we work to eliminate differences of outcome and promote equality for groups with protected characteristics. It also explains how we promote good equalities practice and work to eliminate discrimination or inequality. The objectives we have set for the current reporting cycle are based on this context and are at the end of this document.

The school has data on its composition broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender and by proficiency in English.

We are a small first school with 108 children on roll including nursery and 2-year-old provision. Compared to schools nationally this puts Grange View C E First School in the lowest Percentile.

Teaching and learning is focused upon engaging and responding to the needs of all pupils and engaging harder to reach groups.

The small number of pupils are identified as speaking EAL is always lower than the national average of 19.5% (21.2% in primary schools)ⁱ. When we require support for an EAL pupil, we are able to draw upon the expertise of the County Council's EAL support teachers.

A small number our current cohort of pupils represents other ethnic groups than white British, and this number is always well below the national average for ethnic diversity in schools.

Our disadvantaged pupils in respect of whom we receive the Pupil Premium Grant are reported on as a discrete group in order to demonstrate the effect of the PPG funding on closing gaps. We use the funding effectively to offer academic support and guidance and to subsidise activities and visits. The pupils in receipt of the grant are making expected levels of progress; occasionally, pupils also have disabilities and additional needs, and obtain specialist cycles of support.

Objectives relating to children eligible for Free School Meals are given a high priority, although financial disadvantage is not a protected characteristic, it is a significant priority for schools. The school is acutely aware of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on our families; all children are given a free book bag and water bottle, so that no child is without these during their time here, and we ensure that a supply of pre-loved school uniform is available and that families know that we are happy for children to wear less costly supermarket brand uniform items. In preparation for becoming a primary school in 2024, we have selected a new uniform to celebrate our new identity, and have chosen affordable, supermarket-available options to make this as accessible as possible.

Relationships in school and respectful and inclusive and gender stereotypes are challenged and discussed. Each year group is monitored, and any differences in achievement by sex are picked up quickly.

We represent, discuss and celebrate family diversity and the positive aspects of difference. We audit resources and displays, letters home and the language we use to establish that we are LGBT inclusive, and that all types of different family circumstance is welcomed and respected.

We challenge any perception that family diversity may be uncomfortable for some members of the community to accept; our priority is that every child should feel safe and be secure that the school recognises our legal duty to protect every member of the school community from discrimination, and to foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who don't.

We continuously reflect on the language used in resources and displays, letters home and the language of the classroom to ensure that we consciously use and develop awareness of inclusive, non-discriminatory language. This is an ongoing piece of work; language changes all of the time.

Our school uniform policy is flexible and the guidance does not discriminate against any child on the basis of gender, race, disability, gender identity or belief. Practical alternatives are acceptable.

The school has data on its composition broken down by types of disability and special educational need.

Our school has targeted provision and specialist cycles of support to make the curriculum accessible to pupils with additional needs or SEND.

A small minority of pupils have communication issues. We address this through targeted support and staff training.

3.8% of pupils are supported with an EHC plan compared to national figures of 4.3%ⁱⁱ. This placed the school in the highest percentile.

The school is an accessible building, with ramps, accessible toilets and wheelchair accessible routes.

The school uses a graduated approach by identifying anything that is affecting an ability to learn, and then introducing strategies or interventions which will help to support the child's learning, including 1:1 support. Learners and their families are always involved in this process. The basis of this approach begins with high quality teaching differentiated for need.

We are very committed to ensuring that SEN learners enjoy the same opportunities as their peers wherever possible, by helping them to develop and maintain independence. Our objective is for pupils with SEND to be fully included within their school and local community.

We have set objectives and strategies to help us to better meet the needs of children with SEND. These are outlined in the school's accessibility plan which can be found on the web site. The school's accessibility plan has more specific detail about the ways in which we are working to improve access to the environment, curriculum and printed information for pupils with disabilities

The school records and report instances of discriminatory language or bullying. We ensure that school is a safe environment and that the features of good, safe relationships and safe friendships are regularly promoted and discussed as part of the school's culture. PSHE lessons are the focus of a carefully planned curriculum to help prepare children to feel safe and supported as they live in modern Britain. In the past 6 years we have recorded and reported only one racist incident to the Local Authority.

All staff and some governors access the Home Office online Prevent training as required. They recognise the relationship between hate crime and radicalisation or extremism. We are aware of the vulnerability of people in our religion to messages about some forms of extremism, and welcome open discussion and debate with the children in order to dispel myths and misconceptions.

We recognise the limited opportunities many of our children have to experience the wider UK and urban contexts that exist outside Northumberland and prioritise a programme of learning including visits and visitors to address this.

The school does not record data about religion in our information management system. Religious leaders (including Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist and Church of England) play a part in the life of the school. The new, revised RE curriculum gives a broader understanding of respect for religions and beliefs, and this contributes to the teaching of British values.

Documentation and record-keeping

Our school has a statement of overarching equality policy which is published to the website.

The school aims to extend children's understanding of fostering good relations and challenging discrimination in a practical context through the work we do on promoting friendship, dealing with feelings and feeling safe to share concerns with adults.

Responsibilities

Senior members of staff have special responsibility for equalities matters and statutory elements of the curriculum such as RSHE, PE and RE and the important role these play in the wider Personal Development of children.

Staffing

There is a good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff.

Behaviour and safety

These are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents.

The school receives an annual confirmation of the number of racist incidents reported to the local authority (if any).

Surveys of parents, carers, staff and pupils show that most pupils feel safe from all kinds of bullying. This kind of involvement identifies any issues that can then be addressed.

Curriculum

Focused attention is paid to the needs of specific groups of pupils. There is extra or special provision for certain groups, which changes as appropriate.

There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion and mutual understanding.

These are activities across the curriculum to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the help them to embody values and develop character traits such as resilience, determination, perseverance and optimism.

Consultation and involvement

The school has procedures for consulting and involving parent and carers, and for engaging with local groups and organisations, and has regard in these for the concerns and requirements of the Equality Act.

The school has procedures for finding out how pupils think and feel about the school and has regard in these for the concerns of the Equality Act.

Part Two: Objectives

Fostering Good Relations

Using Picture News each Tuesday during collective worship for all year groups, we will continue to extend and broaden children's critical thinking and awareness of the wider context of multi-cultural, multi-faith modern Britain. In extending the range of the issues we see, discuss and debate, we are confident that we are preparing children for life in modern Britain, and aiming to extend the experiences and wider understanding of children who live in small, rural, often monocultural settings in Northumberland.

Evidence of Impact:

Over the 4 years of the objective, we expect both staff and pupils to demonstrate their wider knowledge, and the enquiry-based approach promoted by the resource to demonstrate a secure understanding of concepts of community cohesion, diversity within society, personal, community and global responsibility, moral dilemmas and challenges.

Through the curriculum, PSHE and collective worship we will continue to extend the range of opportunities the children have to engage with themes such as moral dilemmas, diversity, global learning, human rights, disability equality, anti-

discriminatory behaviours, tolerance, and mutual respect and the role of the bystander.

Expected evidence of impact:

- Increased awareness of equality and justice articulated by staff and pupils.
- Visible links to the courageous advocacy which we promote and develop.
- Greater resilience and an awareness of national, local and global issues articulated by children.
- Willingness to challenge discriminatory thoughts and practices.
- Children acting as agents for change and advocates, respecting and protecting the rights of others, for example by fundraising for and contributing to their local food bank.
- Pupils will understand why Northumberland and society is changing; about their own personal responsibility and how they can be supportive and involved in social action and campaigns.
- Oracy and open debate: children challenging and questioning other viewpoints and substantiating their perspectives.

Closing Gaps: (Ensuring equality of opportunity)- Poverty Proofing and responding to Northumberland's Inequalities Plan.

At Grange View, we have a clear picture of which children, due to protected characteristics such as age, disability, sex or ethnicity might have experienced inequality in the chances they have had to make the same level of progress as their peers in some areas of the curriculum. This had been exacerbated for the year groups most affected by the Covid 19 circumstances; home learning, lost learning, decreased levels of interaction, lost resilience and for some children poorer attendance due to parental concerns about respiratory illnesses and contagion.

It is our objective to diminish any differences in outcome for any child who has experienced any form of inequality or disadvantage, and this includes children who have experienced financial disadvantage, we impacted by Covid school closures or who are care experienced.

Children are fortunate, due to the size of the school, and the staff awareness of the challenges each child faces to be able to have support tailored to their needs.

Some of the strategies the school will use over the 4 years this objective is in place include:

- Developing and refining the graduated approach for pupils with SEND
- Strategies to promote and enhance emotional aspects of wellbeing and mental health, such as the Thrive approach and the role of the Mental Health lead in school
- Evaluating and implementing evidence-based interventions and catch-up programmes
- Ensuring that digital exclusion and other barriers to learning and equality are addressed
- Addressing developmental delays in speech and language, toileting etc

- Developing resilience through residential visits and opportunities to develop physical and emotional resilience.
- Introducing cycles of support through Early Help
- Working in partnership with parents and carers to enhance and build on the support the school is able to offer
- Ensuring that the nurturing, emotionally attuned approaches also extend to staff and their circumstances; to recognise and reward the amount of energy and personal resources their role demands of them.

Evidence of impact

- Every child nurtured and supported as an individual
- Thriving relationships across the whole school community including parents, carers, staff and community partners
- An open door policy in school, where communication flows freely in the best interests of every child.
- Accessible communication systems working well. Including DoJo, email, newsletters and opportunities to contact the school 24/7, and be responded to within a prompt timeframe.

Poverty Proofing the School Day

We have been successful in being selected to participate in the North of Tyne Combined Authority programme based on three pillars of poverty prevention. We chose to have a [Poverty Proofing](#) audit carried out by Children North East.

The project involved parents and children in every class; learning about their experiences and the ways in which school could better understand their perspectives on affordable and challenging aspects of school life. This audit then resulted in us having some suggested actions for us to consider when we work with often unseen inequalities.

We learned, for example:

- That some requests for charitable donations can cause pressure for families experiencing hardship. We try, for example to ask for donations of 'a bottle' at Christmas, but this could be shampoo, ketchup or inexpensive items.
- That we could be more discreet about the way in which school photos are sent home.
- Making donated and borrowed bikes available for bikeability sessions ensures that no child feels left out if they don't have one to bring along.
- We don't encourage bringing in sweets to celebrate a birthday; we all sign one large card or may start to provide a cake for everyone to share.
- Instead of 'Show and tell' we are sharing our experiences by talking together about them.
- When we take packed lunches out of school for a day, our FSM lunches are in bright, individual lunch bags and boxes like every other packed lunch brought from home.
- That permitting children to wear football strips at after school clubs can feel stigmatising for children who don't have them; we now suggest PE kit instead.

Northumberland Inequalities Plan

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 we are all working towards this is in 'creating a system, including communities and residents in which everyone has responsibility for making change happen'.

We see our school as an essential community-based asset:

Our Forest School facilities are available to Brownies, Rainbows and childminders

We use our Co-OP Community fund donations to develop the site as a community resource; restoring the decking and canopy, refurbishing the pond area and making these available to community groups such as messy church.

Widdy Welcomes is our local warm hub and food bank. We are developing ways to pool and share resources all of the time. Including;

- Crafts baskets for community use in our 'Hobbit hut'
- Sharing the school allotment and redesignating it as a community garden.
- Surplus produce from our 'Roots and Shoots' sustainability project can be shared with the wider community via the food bank.
- School provides a tray bake for the regular pop up cafe.
- Children who participate in our Courageous Advocacy project support the food bank at Harvest in particular

Looking ahead to our conversion to a primary school later in 2024: we are planning a number of strategies that we feel will impact on the cost of living in a positive way:

- We are planning ahead to ensure that fruit and fresh snacks will still be available for the older KS2+ children not covered by the current scheme. We have linked with Amble Tesco, hoping they might subsidise this, considered developing a stall where Years 5 and 6 could learn about enterprise and sell healthy snacks. We also considered adding extra fruit to the school meals allocation of food our cook purchases.
- Our new school uniform has been selected to be affordable (supermarkets stock the items, and we may purchase one embroidered item for each child), but removeable logos are also being sourced.
- The colour of the uniform and polo shirt is the same; both can be laundered together!
- We plan to ensure that every eligible pupil in Year 6 will have access to their own 'puberty bag' of menstrual products.

Improving attendance is a national priority; we are working with an EWO to achieve our target of 97%. We are finding that our current incentive: being included in a prize draw for a family food voucher of £50 is working very well, compared with incentives such as a class prize or individual treats for children.

We also plan to reward pupils with the most improved attendance. We intend to include pupils who have attendance in the range 98-100% rather than to only recognise 100%.

We were also successful in obtaining a grant from the Northumberland Poverty and Hardship fund to purchase BookTrust packs for our families who are eligible for Free School Meals. Letterbox Club aims to inspire a love of reading and engagement with

numeracy in children, with fun parcels through the post. Each child receives their own colourful parcel of books, maths games, stationery and other high quality materials once every month. The response from families has been that these are high quality and valued resources. We hope to be able to keep the project going by developing our own parcels once the funded project comes to an end

ⁱ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/2021-22>

ⁱⁱ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england>