

Leicester Preparatory School

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Date: September 2026

Date to be reviewed: September 2027

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Leicester Preparatory School and Berties Nursery, referred to as 'the School' is committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive and respectful environment in which every child and adult is treated fairly and with dignity.

The School values diversity and recognises the contribution that different backgrounds, cultures, religions, beliefs, languages, experiences, abilities and circumstances bring to the School community.

The School will promote equality of opportunity, prevent unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and ensure that pupils are supported to participate fully in education and school life.

The School recognises that equality does not always mean treating everyone identically. Where an individual has a particular need, including because of disability, SEND, medical need, religion or belief or another relevant circumstance, the School will consider appropriate support, reasonable adjustments and other lawful measures.

The School's approach to equality and inclusion applies throughout Leicester Preparatory School and Berties Nursery and is embedded in curriculum, teaching, behaviour, pastoral care, admissions, activities, staffing and day-to-day relationships.

2. Aims

The School aims to:

- comply with its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Independent School Standards;
- provide an environment in which all pupils feel safe, valued, respected and included;
- prevent and respond appropriately to discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required;
- ensure that pupils learn to respect people with protected characteristics in an age-appropriate and impartial manner;
- promote respect for different cultures, religions, beliefs, languages and backgrounds;
- challenge prejudice, stereotyping and discriminatory behaviour;
- ensure children in the Nursery/EYFS experience equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice;
- identify and respond appropriately where equality-related concerns or patterns arise.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has regard to and supports compliance with:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- Independent School Standards Guidance, April 2026;
- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools;
- current Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance relevant to schools;
- Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND framework, where applicable;
- SEND Code of Practice, where applicable;
- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- applicable statutory guidance concerning relationships education, health education, behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and Prevent.

The School will comply with the Equality Act 2010 in relation to pupils, prospective pupils, staff and other individuals to whom the Act applies.

The School also recognises its separate obligations under the Independent School Standards, including:

- ensuring that the curriculum encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to protected characteristics;
- ensuring that teaching does not unlawfully discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010;
- ensuring that principles are actively promoted which encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to protected characteristics.

The April 2026 Independent School Standards Guidance makes clear that a general statement that the School respects everyone is not, by itself, sufficient. Pupils should be made aware of protected characteristics to the extent that is age appropriate. The School therefore ensures that equality and respect are actively taught and demonstrated through the curriculum and wider school life.

4. Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

For pupils in schools, the Equality Act's specific education provisions apply to:

- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

Age and marriage/civil partnership remain relevant to the School's responsibilities towards staff and others where applicable.

The School will have regard to the legal protections applying to the particular individual and situation rather than assuming that every Equality Act provision applies identically to pupils and adults.

5. Unlawful Discrimination

The School will not tolerate unlawful discrimination.

This includes, where applicable:

Direct discrimination

Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Applying a provision, criterion or practice which places people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage, unless the treatment can be objectively justified where the law permits this.

Discrimination arising from disability

Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something arising from their disability, unless lawful justification applies.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments

Failing to take reasonable steps to avoid a substantial disadvantage experienced by a disabled pupil or other person where the legal duty applies.

Harassment

Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Victimisation

Treating someone less favourably because they have carried out, or are believed to have carried out, a protected act under the Equality Act.

The School will consider any applicable statutory or Equality Act exception where relevant. Any exception will be interpreted and applied in accordance with the law and will not be used more broadly than permitted.

6. Equality of Opportunity

The School will seek to ensure that pupils have fair and appropriate access to:

- teaching and learning;
- the curriculum;
- assessment;
- educational visits and trips;
- clubs and enrichment;
- sports and physical activities;
- leadership opportunities;
- pastoral support;
- rewards and recognition;
- facilities and services;
- wider school life.

Equality of opportunity does not require identical treatment in every circumstance.

The School will consider the individual needs and circumstances of pupils and will make appropriate adjustments or provide additional support where reasonably practicable and/or legally required.

7. Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

The School recognises its legal duties towards disabled pupils.

Where a pupil is disabled, the School will consider whether its policies, practices, physical environment or methods of communication place that pupil at a substantial disadvantage and, where required, will take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

Reasonable adjustments may include, where appropriate:

- changes to classroom arrangements;
- adaptation of teaching materials;
- alternative methods of communication;
- additional processing time;
- changes to assessment arrangements;
- adapted activities or equipment;
- changes to routines or procedures;
- support for educational visits and activities.

The School will work with pupils, parents/carers and relevant professionals as appropriate.

The School's **Accessibility Plan** is maintained as a separate document and sets out the School's arrangements for improving accessibility for disabled pupils. The accessibility plan is a separate statutory requirement and is not replaced by this policy.

8. SEND and Inclusion

The School recognises that pupils with SEND may require additional support to access learning or participate fully in school life.

The School will identify and respond to individual needs through its SEND procedures and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance.

The School will not assume that:

- all pupils with SEND have the same needs;
- all disabled pupils have SEND; or
- a pupil's disability or SEND determines their ability or potential.

Equality considerations will be incorporated into the School's SEND and inclusion practice.

9. Curriculum and Teaching

The curriculum will be broad, balanced, age appropriate and inclusive.

Teaching and other activities will:

- encourage respect for other people;
- pay particular regard to protected characteristics;
- promote understanding of differences;
- challenge prejudice and harmful stereotypes;
- enable pupils to participate appropriately in discussion and reflection;
- support pupils to develop respectful relationships.

Protected characteristics will be addressed in an **age-appropriate and impartial** manner.

The School recognises that it does not need to teach every protected characteristic in every year group. However, pupils must have an appropriate opportunity to become aware of the protected characteristics and to develop respect for those who share them.

Where a relevant incident, event or concern arises within the School community, the School will provide age-appropriate teaching or discussion to help pupils understand the issue and develop respectful attitudes.

The School will take steps to ensure that pupils do not develop a negative or restrictive view of the role of the opposite sex.

Teaching will not discriminate unlawfully against pupils.

10. PSHE, RSHE, SMSC and Fundamental British Values

Equality and diversity will be promoted through the curriculum, including PSHE and RSHE, assemblies, pastoral provision and wider school activities.

The School will promote:

- democracy;
- the rule of law;
- individual liberty;
- mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The School will also support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by helping them to:

- understand themselves and others;
- distinguish right from wrong;
- take responsibility for their behaviour;
- respect people whose views and backgrounds may differ from their own;
- participate positively in school and wider society.

Respect for protected characteristics is treated as a distinct requirement and is not considered to be satisfied solely through the promotion of fundamental British values.

11. Cultural, Religious and Belief Diversity

The School values cultural, religious and belief diversity.

The School will:

- respect different cultures, traditions, religions and beliefs;
- promote understanding and respectful discussion;
- challenge racial, religious and cultural prejudice;
- avoid harmful stereotypes;
- consider legitimate religious requirements and observances appropriately;
- ensure that curriculum materials provide pupils with opportunities to learn about cultures and traditions beyond their own.

The curriculum will enable pupils to learn about the achievements of other cultures, including cultures outside Europe, where appropriate.

Where religious requirements affect school activities, food, dress or participation, the School will consider individual circumstances and applicable legal duties.

12. Race and Ethnicity

The School will not tolerate racism or racial discrimination.

Racist language, stereotyping, harassment or behaviour will be challenged and dealt with appropriately.

The curriculum and wider school environment will promote understanding of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and will avoid presenting any group in a derogatory or stereotyped manner.

The School will monitor significant racial incidents and use this information to identify patterns and improve practice.

13. English as an Additional Language and Linguistic Diversity

The School recognises and values linguistic diversity.

Pupils who speak or are exposed to a language other than English may be bilingual or multilingual and are not assumed to have a learning difficulty simply because English is an additional language.

Where a pupil requires support with English in order to access learning, the School will identify their needs and provide appropriate classroom support or targeted provision.

The School will distinguish between:

- language background;
- English language proficiency;
- SEND;
- other factors which may affect learning.

A pupil's nationality, ethnicity or family background will not be used as a proxy for ability or English proficiency.

Where required, details of the School's educational and welfare provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language will be made available in accordance with the Independent School Standards.

14. Sex, Gender Reassignment and Related Matters

The School recognises sex and gender reassignment as protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and will not tolerate unlawful discrimination on these grounds.

The School will treat pupils with dignity and respect.

Where matters relating to sex, gender reassignment or related issues arise, the School will consider:

- safeguarding;
- privacy and dignity;
- the rights and needs of all pupils;
- any relevant Equality Act duties;

- the School's legal and regulatory responsibilities;
- current Department for Education and Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance.

Individual situations will be considered carefully and consistently rather than dealt with through assumptions or stereotypes.

The School will review its practice where legislation or statutory guidance changes.

15. Sexual Orientation

The School will not unlawfully discriminate against pupils or staff because of sexual orientation.

The School will challenge discriminatory language, bullying, harassment or exclusion related to sexual orientation.

Age-appropriate teaching will promote respectful relationships and challenge prejudice.

16. Pregnancy and Maternity

The School recognises the Equality Act protections relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Where relevant, the School will ensure that pupils and staff are not unlawfully disadvantaged because of pregnancy or maternity.

Any situation involving a pregnant pupil will be managed sensitively, taking account of safeguarding, welfare, health, education and equality considerations.

17. Age and Marriage/Civil Partnership

The School recognises age and marriage/civil partnership as protected characteristics under the Equality Act in relevant contexts, particularly employment.

The School will not unlawfully discriminate against staff or other adults on these grounds.

The School may lawfully distinguish between pupils on the basis of age where the Equality Act school provisions permit this.

18. Behaviour, Bullying and Discriminatory Incidents

The School expects all pupils to treat others with dignity and respect.

Discriminatory behaviour, harassment and bullying will not be accepted.

This includes, where relevant:

- racist abuse;
- sexist abuse;

- religious or belief-based harassment;
- homophobic or biphobic language or behaviour;
- derogatory behaviour relating to disability;
- harassment relating to gender reassignment;
- deliberately targeting someone because of a protected characteristic;
- stereotyping or degrading comments;
- discriminatory online behaviour.

Such behaviour will be addressed under the School's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy and, where appropriate, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The School will consider:

- the nature and seriousness of the incident;
- the impact on the affected pupil;
- the circumstances and context;
- whether there is a safeguarding concern;
- whether additional support is required;
- whether action is required to prevent recurrence.

Significant or repeated discriminatory incidents will be recorded and monitored.

The School will use incident information to identify patterns and assess whether further action, education or changes to practice are required.

19. Safeguarding

Equality and inclusion form part of the School's wider safeguarding arrangements.

A concern involving discrimination, harassment, prejudice or bullying may also constitute a safeguarding concern.

Staff must report safeguarding concerns in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The School recognises that pupils who experience discrimination or harassment may require additional pastoral support.

20. Admissions

The School will operate its admissions arrangements fairly and consistently and will comply with the Equality Act.

The School will not unlawfully discriminate against prospective pupils in admissions.

Where a prospective pupil is disabled or has additional needs, the School will consider relevant reasonable adjustments and obtain appropriate information to enable the School to determine whether and how those needs can safely and effectively be met.

Admission arrangements will be implemented in accordance with the School's published Admissions Policy and any applicable lawful exceptions.

21. Attendance, Behaviour Sanctions and Exclusions

Attendance, behaviour, rewards, sanctions, suspensions and exclusions will be managed fairly and consistently.

Where a pupil's disability, SEND, medical condition or other relevant circumstance may affect their attendance or behaviour, the School will consider whether adjustments, support or other appropriate measures are required.

The existence of an individual need does not automatically prevent the School from applying a proportionate behaviour sanction where lawful and appropriate.

Decisions will be made in accordance with the School's relevant policies and the law.

22. Uniform, Appearance and Participation

Uniform and appearance requirements will be applied consistently and lawfully.

The School will consider reasonable adjustments or alternative arrangements where required because of:

- disability;
- medical need;
- religion or belief;
- another relevant protected characteristic.

The School will seek to ensure that pupils are able to participate in school activities while maintaining appropriate standards of safety, dignity and inclusion.

23. Educational Visits, Clubs and Wider School Life

The School will seek to ensure that all pupils have equitable opportunities to participate in:

- educational visits;
- residential visits where applicable;
- clubs;
- sports;
- performances;
- competitions;
- enrichment activities;
- leadership opportunities;
- school celebrations and events.

Where an individual pupil requires an adjustment or additional support, the School will consider what reasonable and proportionate arrangements can be made.

Risk assessments and trip planning will take relevant individual needs into account.

24. Nursery and EYFS

The School's Nursery/EYFS provision will promote **equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported**, in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework effective from 1 September 2026.

Practitioners will:

- recognise every child as an individual;
- take account of children's different needs and circumstances;
- provide an inclusive learning environment;
- avoid discriminatory assumptions and stereotypes;
- promote positive relationships;
- support children's social development;
- respond appropriately to individual interests and needs;
- work in partnership with parents/carers;
- make appropriate adjustments for children with SEND and disabilities;
- ensure that every child can participate in learning and play as fully as possible.

Books, toys, displays, resources and activities will reflect diversity appropriately and will not promote discriminatory stereotypes.

Staff will model respectful language and behaviour and will respond to discriminatory behaviour in an age-appropriate manner.

The School will ensure that equality and anti-discriminatory practice are embedded in everyday EYFS provision rather than treated as a separate activity.

25. Inclusion of Families and Parents/Carers

The School values positive relationships with parents and carers.

The School will seek to communicate respectfully and appropriately with families from different cultural, linguistic, religious and family backgrounds.

Where reasonable and appropriate, the School will consider adjustments to communication to enable parents/carers to understand important information concerning their child's education and welfare.

Concerns raised by parents concerning discrimination or equality will be treated seriously and handled through the appropriate School procedure.

26. Staff Equality and Employment

The School is committed to fair and non-discriminatory employment practices.

Equality will be considered in:

- recruitment and selection;
- induction;
- training and professional development;
- appraisal;
- promotion;
- working arrangements;
- disciplinary matters;
- grievance procedures;
- termination of employment.

The School will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation of staff.

The School will make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees where required.

This policy operates alongside the School's Staff Code of Conduct, Safer Recruitment Policy, Grievance Policy, Disciplinary Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

27. Positive Action

Where lawful and appropriate, the School may use positive action in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Positive action may be considered where people sharing a protected characteristic:

- experience a disadvantage;
- have particular needs; or
- have disproportionately low participation in a particular activity.

Any positive action will be proportionate and lawful and will not amount to unlawful positive discrimination.

28. Curriculum Resources and Representation

The School will seek to ensure that books, displays, teaching materials and other resources:

- represent diversity appropriately;
- do not unnecessarily reinforce harmful stereotypes;
- do not present protected groups in a derogatory manner;
- support pupils' understanding of the diversity of society.

Representation will be age appropriate and purposeful.

The School does not require every protected characteristic to be represented in every resource or year group.

29. Political Impartiality

Where political issues arise through teaching, assemblies, external speakers or wider school activities, the School will comply with the Independent School Standards concerning political impartiality.

Political discussion may take place in an age-appropriate educational context, but the School will not promote partisan political views.

Where opposing political views are presented to pupils, the School will provide a balanced and fair opportunity to consider relevant alternative views in accordance with its legal duties.

30. Pupil Voice and Participation

The School will provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to express their views and experiences.

Pupil voice may be used to identify:

- experiences of inclusion or exclusion;
- concerns about bullying or discrimination;
- barriers to participation;
- areas where school practices could be improved.

The School will consider pupil views in an age-appropriate way and will take appropriate action where concerns are identified.

31. Complaints and Concerns

Any pupil, parent/carer, member of staff or other person who believes they have experienced unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation may raise a concern with the School.

Concerns will be dealt with through the most appropriate procedure, which may include:

- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying procedures;
- Safeguarding procedures;
- Complaints Procedure;
- Grievance Procedure;
- Disciplinary procedures.

Where a concern raises a safeguarding issue, the safeguarding procedure will apply.

No person will be victimised for raising an equality concern in good faith.

32. Training and Staff Awareness

The School will ensure that staff understand their responsibilities under this policy.

Training and induction will cover, as appropriate:

- equality and inclusion;
- discrimination and harassment;
- protected characteristics;
- SEND and reasonable adjustments;
- inclusive teaching and practice;
- culturally responsive practice;
- appropriate responses to discriminatory incidents;
- safeguarding links;
- EYFS equality and anti-discriminatory practice for relevant staff.

New staff will be made aware of this policy as part of induction.

Training will be refreshed where necessary, including following significant legislative, regulatory or policy changes.

33. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher and senior leadership team will monitor the effectiveness of the School's equality arrangements.

The School may review:

- discriminatory incidents;
- bullying incidents;
- behaviour records;
- attendance information;
- exclusions and suspensions;
- SEND and reasonable-adjustment arrangements;
- complaints;
- participation in trips, clubs and enrichment;
- curriculum provision;
- pupil voice;
- parent feedback;
- staff feedback.

Monitoring will be used to identify patterns, consider whether any group is experiencing avoidable disadvantage and determine whether further action is required.

The School will focus on the impact of its arrangements and not simply on the existence of documents.

34. Equality Considerations in Decision-Making

When developing or significantly changing policies, procedures or practices, the School will consider whether the proposal could disadvantage people sharing a protected characteristic.

Where appropriate, the School will document relevant equality considerations and any action required.

A formal written equality impact assessment will be undertaken where the School considers this necessary and proportionate to the decision being made.

The School will review the impact of significant arrangements where appropriate.

35. Governance and Leadership

The proprietor has overall responsibility for ensuring that the School meets its legal and regulatory obligations.

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy across the Prep School and Nursery.

Senior leaders are responsible for ensuring that equality and inclusion are embedded within their areas of responsibility.

All staff are expected to:

- understand and follow this policy;
- model respectful behaviour;
- challenge inappropriate discriminatory behaviour;
- support inclusive practice;
- make appropriate adjustments within their role;
- report concerns appropriately.

The proprietor/governing body will provide appropriate oversight of the School's equality arrangements and will consider whether the policy is effectively implemented.

36. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

The School will maintain appropriate records relating to equality and inclusion, including significant discriminatory incidents, complaints and actions taken.

Records will be maintained in accordance with the School's Data Protection and Privacy Policy and applicable UK data-protection legislation.

Sensitive information will only be shared where there is an appropriate lawful basis and where sharing is necessary and proportionate.

37. Accessibility Plan

The School maintains a separate **Accessibility Plan** in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

The Accessibility Plan addresses:

- increasing access to the curriculum for disabled pupils;
- improving access to the physical environment; and
- improving the availability of accessible information.

- This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy should be read alongside the Accessibility Plan.

38. Publication and Availability

This policy will be made available to staff and parents/carers and may be published on the School website.

Relevant information concerning equality, inclusion, SEND and EAL provision will be made available to parents and prospective parents in accordance with the Independent School Standards.

The School will ensure that relevant policies and arrangements can be provided to ISI, the Department for Education or another relevant inspectorate when required.

39. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where:

- legislation changes;
- statutory or regulatory guidance changes;
- the Independent School Standards are amended;
- the EYFS framework changes;
- significant equality-related concerns arise;
- an incident identifies a weakness in current practice;
- the School's provision or circumstances materially change.

The School will ensure that the policy remains aligned with the law and current statutory and regulatory requirements.

40. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Accessibility Plan;
- SEND Policy;
- Curriculum Policy;
- RSE Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Admissions Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- Educational Visits Policy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Safer Recruitment Policy;
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy;

- EYFS/Nursery Policy;
- First Aid and Medical Conditions Policies.

41. Policy Statement

Leicester Preparatory School and Berties Nursery is committed to ensuring that every child is able to learn, develop and participate in school life in an environment characterised by equality, respect, inclusion and dignity.

The School will actively promote respect for people with protected characteristics, challenge unlawful discrimination and prejudice, and ensure that equality and anti-discriminatory practice are embedded throughout the Prep School and Nursery.

The School recognises that effective equality practice depends not only on written policies but on what pupils experience every day through teaching, relationships, behaviour, leadership and the wider culture of the School.