Equality Information and Objectives Statement

Burnside Primary School

Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Kind

- **Policy Owner:** Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team
- **Approved By:** Governing Board
- **Date of Approval:** September 2026
- **Review Cycle:** Annual for Equality Information / Four-yearly for Equality Objectives
- **Next Review Date:** September 2027 (Information Update) / September 2030(Objectives Renewal)

1. Aims and Vision

At Burnside Primary School, our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion is a direct reflection of our core school motto: **Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Kind**. We believe that every individual in our school community deserves to learn, work, and grow in an environment free from discrimination, where diversity is celebrated as a core strength.

Our school aims to meet its statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination** and other conduct that is 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, building meaningful connections, friendship, and mutual respect between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We aim to develop an inclusive culture where pupils from all backgrounds—including our youngest learners in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)—feel proud of their identity and are fully empowered to participate in all aspects of school life.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the statutory requirements under the following national frameworks:

- **The Equality Act 2010**, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to protect individuals from direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

- **The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011**, which require schools to publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the PSED and to formulate and publish specific, measurable equality objectives every four years.

This policy is fully aligned with the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance document, *The Equality Act 2010 and schools*, and conforms to current Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspection frameworks regarding Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) development and the promotion of Fundamental British Values.

The Protected Characteristics

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is strictly unlawful for Burnside Primary School to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a pupil, prospective pupil, staff member, volunteer, or parent/carer on the basis of a protected characteristic. These characteristics are:

- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins)
- Disability (including long-term physical, mental, sensory, or health conditions)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership (applicable strictly to workforce and employment duties)

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment and the provision of external goods and services. In accordance with statutory allowances, age-based protections do not apply to pupils; therefore, the school is fully entitled to group pupils into classes based on their age group with curriculum materials tailored to their specific developmental stage.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring the school meets all statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. The board designates an Equality Link Governor to oversee compliance, monitor school data patterns, and ensure that the principles of equity are applied to staff recruitment, financial resource allocations, and school structural

adaptations. The Governing Board receives a termly report from the Headteacher regarding any discriminatory, racist, or bullying incidents.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher (Miss Jane Ramsay) is responsible for the operational implementation of this statement and its objectives. The Headteacher ensures that all staff are fully trained in equality issues, that appointment panels give due regard to non-discriminatory recruitment laws, and that any incidents of unfair treatment, prejudice, or harassment are addressed immediately and with the utmost seriousness.

3.3 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Our Senior Leadership Team, including our EYFS Senior Leader (Mrs Janine McCaw), Key Stage 1 Senior Leader (Mrs Rebecca Turnbull), and SENDCO & Lower Key Stage 2 Leader (Mrs Corinna Burnip), actively monitors pupil progress, attendance, and behaviour data to identify and eliminate any demographic discrepancies. The SLT supports teaching staff to implement inclusive strategies and coordinates robust adaptive learning pathways.

3.4 All School Staff (Teaching and Support Staff)

All members of the Burnside workforce are required to maintain a comprehensive awareness of this statement and apply its principles uniformly. Staff are responsible for:

- Treating all pupils, families, and colleagues fairly, equally, and with deep respect.
- Promoting positive images and diverse perspectives through the curriculum while actively challenging stereotypes.
- Identifying, challenging, and reporting any incidents of prejudice, racism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, or ableism.
- Ensuring that no pupil is marginalized or excluded from learning, play, or extra-curricular activities.

4. Eliminating Discrimination

Burnside Primary School is acutely aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies rigorously with its non-discrimination provisions. We recognize that discrimination can manifest in two distinct forms, both of which are actively prevented within our setting:

- **Direct Discrimination:** Occurs when an individual is treated less favourably than another person is, or would be, treated in a comparable situation because of a protected characteristic.

- **Indirect Discrimination:** Occurs when an unadjusted "provision, criterion, or practice" is applied universally across the school but has the unintended effect of putting people who share a specific protected characteristic at a substantial disadvantage.

Defining and Responding to Discriminatory Incidents

Harassment and victimisation are entirely unacceptable and are not tolerated within our school community. The Equality Act 2010 defines harassment as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating an person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

To maintain our promise to **Be Safe**, all staff are trained to recognize and immediately challenge discriminatory behaviours, which include but are not limited to:

- Physical assault or intimidation targeted at an individual or group due to their race, sex, disability, or sexual orientation.
- The use of derogatory names, insults, slurs, or exclusionary jokes.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or faith-based graffiti or digital messages.
- The introduction of discriminatory materials or insignia into the school environment.
- Verbal abuse, threats, or the incitement of others to discriminate or bully.
- Ridicule or isolation of an individual for differences in culture, food, music, religious practices, or dress.
- Refusal to cooperate or play with peers based on a protected characteristic.

All serious discriminatory incidents are recorded systematically on the school's internal safeguarding and behaviour database, reported directly to the Headteacher, and summarized for the Governing Board on a termly basis.

5. Advancing Equality of Opportunity

Burnside Primary School advances equality of opportunity by proactively removing barriers and tailoring support to meet the specific profiles of our children and families.

Pupil Achievement and Progress Data

We regularly collect, analyse, and monitor pupil achievement, progress, attendance, and exclusion patterns across distinct demographic groups, including race, sex, disability, and socio-economic status (Premium funding groups). This tracking allows

our Senior Leadership Team to detect early trends, deploy rapid academic interventions, and narrow any emerging attainment gaps.

Curriculum and Phase Accessibility

We ensure that our integrated learning pathways—spanning from our two-year-old Budding Explorers and Nursery room through Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2, and Upper Key Stage 2—are universally accessible.

- Our SENDCO (Mrs Corinna Burnip) coordinates with external agencies to guarantee specialized texts, modified materials, and enhanced acoustic environments for pupils with sensory or physical needs.
- Our Computing Lead (Miss Gabby Croft) ensures that assistive digital technologies are seamlessly embedded into regular classroom practice so that disabled pupils can navigate our digital curriculum smartly and independently.
- Our extended day childcare services (Breakfast Club, After-School Care, and Holiday Clubs) are monitored to ensure they reflect the broad diversity of our school population, with reasonable physical and financial adjustments implemented to maximize participation.

Supporting Staff and Parents/Carers

We extend our equal opportunities framework to the adults within our community. All staff appointments, promotions, and Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) allocations are executed purely on merit, capability, and transparent legal criteria. We provide targeted support for disabled staff, parents, and carers—such as arranging sign language interpreters for school events, translating communications into community languages, or modifying meeting locations within our single-level building to comfortably accommodate wheelchair users.

6. Fostering Good Relations

We believe that fostering excellent relations across all characteristics is vital for creating a harmonious and unified school community. We achieve this through our values-based education framework, which centers on the core principles of respect, resilience, empathy, and reflection.

Our curriculum is intentionally designed to cultivate global citizenship, tolerance, and shared values:

- **The Literacy Strategy:** Under the direction of our Literacy Lead, our English and reading curriculum systematically introduces pupils to high-quality literature from a diverse range of cultures, backgrounds, and family structures, validating identities and challenging stereotypes.

- **Assemblies and Citizenship:** Our structured assembly calendar actively promotes Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) development and explores international histories, disability awareness, and diverse faith traditions. Pupils are supported to take active leadership roles within these presentations.
- **Community and Faith Connections:** We maintain strong links with local community organizations and invite leaders from a broad range of faith groups to speak at school events. We coordinate regular, meaningful opportunities for our pupils to interact with diverse communities across Northumberland and the wider region.
- **Democracy and Pupil Voice:** Our School Council, Values Action Group, and Eco-Committee feature democratically elected representatives from varied backgrounds and year groups, ensuring all pupils understand how to collaborate constructively and champion human rights.

7. Equality Considerations in Decision-Making

Burnside Primary School ensures that "due regard" is given to equality implications whenever significant operational or strategic decisions are made. We do not treat equality as an afterthought; it is integrated directly into our planning stages.

Whenever a new policy is formulated, a staffing restructure is proposed, or an educational visit is planned, the school conducts a written **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**. This assessment is completed alongside standard health and safety risk assessments by the organizing member of staff and is reviewed by the School Business Manager.

During the planning of any school trip or extra-curricular activity, the EIA prompts staff to verify that:

- The event does not directly conflict with major religious holidays or fasting periods.
- The venue and transport are fully accessible to pupils with physical disabilities or complex medical profiles.
- Equivalent facilities, sports provisions, and accommodation parameters are secured for all pupils.
- Financial remissions are deployed discreetly so that socio-economic status does not result in exclusion.

8. Current Equality Objectives (2025–2029)

To ensure our commitment to equality is measurable and actionable, the Governing Board and Senior Leadership Team have established the following strategic objectives for the current four-year cycle:

Objective 1: Narrowing the Attainment Gap

- **Focus Area:** To close the achievement gap in reading and mathematics between disadvantaged pupils (including those eligible for Pupil Premium) and their non-disadvantaged peers across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- **Success Criteria:** Data analysis demonstrates a minimum 15% reduction in the internal attainment gap by July 2029, driven by high-quality adaptive teaching and evidence-based interventions.

Objective 2: Diversification of the Curriculum

- **Focus Area:** To systematically audit and enrich our whole-school reading and curriculum resources, ensuring that positive representations of disabled individuals, diverse ethnic backgrounds, and varied family structures are embedded into daily learning.
- **Success Criteria:** The Literacy Lead verifies that 100% of year-group core text maps feature text selections that accurately reflect and celebrate global diversity, resulting in enhanced pupil engagement and empathy scores in student surveys.

Objective 3: Digital Inclusion and Accessibility

- **Focus Area:** To ensure our digital curriculum and home-learning provisions are fully accessible to neurodivergent pupils and those with physical or sensory disabilities.
- **Success Criteria:** Our Computing Lead completes the implementation of universal assistive software presets across all school devices, ensuring that 100% of pupils requiring adaptive screen adjustments or text-to-speech software use these tools confidently during daily learning sessions.

9. Monitoring and Review Arrangements

The Headteacher and the Equality Link Governor routinely monitor the school's compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

- The statistical equality information concerning our pupil population, workforce demographics, and historical incident rates is updated and published **annually** on the school website.

- The core text of this statement and the progress made towards our active equality objectives are formally reviewed and evaluated **every four years** by the Governing Board and the Headteacher.

10. Links with Other Statutory Policies

To ensure complete operational cohesion, this statement must be read in conjunction with the following statutory school policies:

- **Accessibility Plan:** Details the physical adaptations to our site and long-term adjustments to curriculum delivery.
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Information Report:** Outlines our school-specific graduated response for pupils with additional learning needs.
- **School Behaviour Policy:** Connects our high behavioural expectations with reasonable, dignified adjustments for pupils under our motto to *Be Safe, Be Smart, Be Kind*.
- **Risk Assessment Policy:** Governs the identification and mitigation of barriers to safety across daily routines, estate management, and off-site excursions.