Equalities & Diversity Policy

OLD PALACE & CHILDREN'S HOUSE FEDERATION
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Aims

This policy sets out the federation's commitment to promoting equality and diversity. We aim to ensure that pupils, employees, parents/ carers, governors, multi-agency staff, contractors and visitors to school are treated fairly, and with dignity and respect.

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and the wider community.

Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. We wish to provide an environment which is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimization of any kind and in which all feel safe, supported and valued as individuals.

We actively tackle discrimination and seek to recognise and celebrate diversity within the local and global community, in order to promote good relations and foster positive attitudes to all people of all backgrounds.

This policy sets out how the school aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

2. Legislation

This policy meets the requirements under the following legislation and guidance:

- 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
- Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools.

And encompasses the following 'Protected Characteristics' set out in the Equality Act:

1. Age
2. Race
3. Gender reassignment
4. Religion and belief

5. Marriage or civil partnership
6. Disability
7. Sex
8. Sexual orientation
9. Pregnancy and maternity

The school is committed to tackling all forms of inequality and discrimination, which for many extend beyond the protected characteristics, for example discrimination based on ability, profession or financial circumstances.

It is also unlawful to discriminate by association or perception, such as treating a pupil unfairly based on the protective characteristics of their parents or family members.

Protected characteristics 1 & 4 do not apply to pupils

Please see Appendix 1 for further information and a definition of terms.

3. Eliminating Discrimination

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

- The school promotes attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour;
- Pupils have the opportunity to explore discrimination and its impact, through topic and PHSE lessons and the use of key texts in English. They are supported to develop skills which allow them to detect bias, challenge stereotypes and promote equality and justice;
- All Discriminatory Incidents are recorded on CPOMs and reported to the local authority using the online reporting form. The number and nature of any discriminatory incidents are reported to the governing board termly;
- In alignment with the Safeguarding and Conduct policies, staff must report low-level concerns regarding discriminatory language or microaggressions to the DSL, allowing the school to identify and address patterns of unwitting prejudice before they escalate;
- The school will utilise IT monitoring software (such as SENSo) to proactively identify trends in discriminatory language used on school devices, using this data to inform targeted PHSE interventions or Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs)
- Discriminatory incidents are treated seriously. The school's Behaviour Policy sets out the sanctions to be used;
- When a Discriminatory Incident occurs, the school carefully considers the need for any follow up action. Examples of such actions include the delivery of additional year group PSHE sessions by the phase leader to explore why the use of certain words/ phrases is discriminatory, how their use can impact on others and why this is unacceptable.
- Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.
- New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction and other staff and governors receive regular reminders of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.
- The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate

4. Advancing equality of opportunity

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

- Providing a curriculum which ensure quality of access for all pupils and helps prepare them for life in a diverse society;

- Providing visual resources (including photographs) and resources that reflect diversity across all aspects of equality;

- When ordering new resources, considering how they show equality, provide positive, non-stereotypical images, reflect a range of viewpoints and show the reality of a diverse society by specifically engaging girls in construction and boys in nurture play/cooking

- Promote and celebrate the contribution of women and different ethnic groups and cultures across all subjects, including the achievements and contributions made by individuals with other protected characteristics, such as Helen Keller and Alan Turing;

- Holding consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, ability or social background;

- Ensuring that lessons meet the needs of all learners, including SEND, EAL and higher ability pupils, for example through the use of a range of teaching strategies, scaffolding, language frameworks, open ended tasks and application of higher order thinking skills;

- Encouraging all pupils to be actively involved in their own learning, using a growth mindset to build on their own achievements, rather than measuring themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light;

- Tracking the performance of individual pupils to ensure that everyone is making the best possible progress. This information is used to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary. End of year targets are set to narrow any gaps in performance and Interventions and resources are available to support groups or individual pupils where information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance information.

- Comparing school performance information with national data and Local Authority data, to ensure that pupil groups are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances.

- Making reasonable adjustments to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by pupils and staff which are connected to a particular characteristic they have. Examples include the provision of specialist equipment and additional breaks and the use of visual symbols, dual-language texts and makaton signs to support children with communication difficulties;

- Promoting high aspirations for all groups, encouraging pupils to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to any of the protected characteristics. Guests for the school's annual career fair are chosen to provide positive role models based on gender and ethnicity;

- Ensuring that pastoral support takes into account disability needs, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious and ethnic differences and the experience and needs of particular groups, such as Gypsy Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils;

- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in all activities, for example encouraging all pupils to access the full curriculum, clubs and educational visits, including residentials. Equal access to all activities is provided from an early age e.g. girls playing football, boys playing netball and mixed teams wherever possible;

- Taking steps to meet the specific needs of people who have a particular characteristic, for example using occasional closure days to allow pupils and staff to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-al-Adha with their families, supporting UKS2 pupils who wish to fast during Ramadan and avoiding food related events during this time.

- Providing staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of equality and diversity and support staff in meeting the needs of different groups of pupils.

- Supporting the career development and aspirations of all staff member, including equal access to professional development opportunities

- Advertising all posts formally as set out in the school's Recruitment Policy and ensuring that those involved in recruitment and selection are suitably trained to ensure equality good practice is implemented throughout the recruitment and selection process;

- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact;

- Helping all parents to support their child's education and encouraging them to participate in the full life of the school. This includes providing workshops and offering some coffee mornings which target different groups, such as session for dads and Somali parents.

- Promote Early Help and provide other support mechanisms, such as Team Around the Child as a method for collaborative problem-solving with multi-agency partners.

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

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing

- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information

- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in racist and homophobic discriminatory incidents)

- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

5. 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:

- Creating an atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school;
- Adults modelling the positive approach to equal and diversity that the school expects;
- Promoting respect and understanding of a range of identities through our curriculum;
- Ensuring any school paperwork and systems include inclusive language that values different family set-ups;
- Providing opportunities for pupils to appreciate and celebrate their own culture and religion and that of others, for example through the use of festival assemblies;
- Providing positive role models across the school to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the school community. This modelling extends to a staff member's professional digital footprint; colleagues must ensure that any content they share or endorse on social media does not disparage any of the nine protected characteristics or conflict with the school's equality values;
- Staff support the fostering of good relations by maintaining a professional standard of dress and personal appearance that respects the cultural sensitivities of the school community, ensuring clothing is appropriate for a professional setting;
- Providing opportunities for pupils to interact with children attending schools with a different ethnic, religious and socio-economic context;
- Monitoring relationships between pupils and providing additional PHSE session where pupils from a different group are being excluded or treated differently;
- Working with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of people with different backgrounds and identities, for example through coffee mornings and cultural events:
- Promoting the appropriate use of language by all members of the school community, so as not to offend, transmit or confirm stereotypes, including the correct use of terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals (e.g. Inuit rather Eskimo); so as to create positive images of different groups, which support the development of self esteem;
- Emphasising the value that diversity brings to the school community and holding events to promote this;
- Promoting cultural and religious events in the local area to all staff and parents and encouraging members of the local community to regularly join in school activities, such as the summer fete, make it real presentations and festival assemblies

6. Equality considerations in decision making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. An Equality Impact Assessment is completed at the time when school policies are being developed and is then kept under review on a continuing basis. See Appendix 2

7. Equality objectives

Each year the school publishes data which shows the school's current context.
The school also publishes equality objectives at least once every four years.
Please refer to the school's Public Sector Equality Duty document

Area 1: Eliminating Discrimination

Objective	**Actions**	**Success Criteria**	**Monitor & Review**
To foster a culture where everyone in the school community feels confident to share their authentic selves and lived experiences without fear of prejudice.	Deliver Equalities training to raise awareness of micro-aggressions and their impact on individuals Establish a safe feedback channel for staff to anonymously report incidents of micro-aggression. Use this to identify trends and then provide additional training to address these Ensure that the Old Palace PHSE curriculum references national/international events celebrated by groups with protected characteristics, such as International Woman's Day, Pride and International Day of Persons with Disabilities, in order to promote awareness and understanding.	Culture Adults will be mindful to avoid micro-insults (Subtle snubs or demeanors that convey rudeness and insensitivity to a person's identity) and micro-invalidations (Communications that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person) in order to promote a sense belonging Staff Survey Results will show that all staff feel confident to share their authentic selves and lived experiences in the work place. Learning conversations Children will be able	Pupil Learning Conversations Behaviour Analysis/ record of discriminatory incidents Staff survey Number/ type of micro-aggressions reports

		to name a range of events and explain why they are important to the people who celebrate them	
To ensure that the school's literary and visual resources continue to provide positive role models for all the protected characteristics	Purchase additional resources to address any gaps in current provision.	An audit of resources/environment will confirm that positive non-stereotypical role models are present across all 9 protected characteristics	Resources audit

Area 2: Advancing Equality of opportunity

Objective	**Actions**	**Success Criteria**	**Monitor & Review**
To promote greater stakeholder diversity on the federation's strategic decision making boards	<u>School Council</u> Review membership of the School Council to ensure that this represents diversity within the pupil population and if it does not, take steps to address this such as creating a SEND advocate post <u>Governing Board</u> Continue to promote diversity by highlighting the desire to increase diversity on materials used to advertise parent, LA and staff vacancies. When advertising co-opted governor vacancies target specialist networks in order to attract applications from under- represented groups	Membership of these boards will reflect greater diversity, by including members who reflect the protected characteristics which are currently under represented.	School Council membership Governing Board membership

Promote greater diversity in the school work force at Children's House Nursery	Request diverse student placements from partners such as LETTA and universities Target specialist networks, such as 'Men in the Early Years' to encourage applications from under-represented groups	There will be greater diversity in the work force.	Work force equalities monitoring

Area 3: Fostering good relations

Objective	**Actions**	**Success Criteria**	**Monitor & Review**
To embed a culture of respect and belonging by celebrating the school community's diverse cultures, languages and beliefs	Hosting workshops and events that showcase the community's diverse food, dance, music, and art Holding language sessions for children to celebrate their own and others' linguistic heritage	High levels of community engagement and attendance at workshops and cultural events Continued high levels of participation from the local community in school-wide activities like the summer fete and festival assemblies	Newsletters Parent Voice Pupil Voice

8. Responsibility for the Policy

In our school, all members of the school community have a responsibility towards supporting the equality agenda. Responsibilities are laid out as follows:

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community;
- The procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;
- The equality information and objectives as set out in this policy are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents
- The published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years

- The named Equality Governor will have an overview, on behalf of the governing body, on all discriminatory incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and the action taken and recommended in relation to all said incidents
- Monitoring will include Equal Opportunities recruitment data

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Along with the Governing body, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Overseeing the implementation of the Equality Policy;
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the Equality Policy;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- Taking appropriate action in response to all prejudice-related incidents. .
- Promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Monitoring success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

The **equality link governor** will:

- Meet with the designated member of staff for equality at least annually, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
- Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
- Report back to the full governing board regarding any issues and recommended actions

The **designated member of staff for equality** will:

- Support the headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Meet with the equality link governor at least annually to raise and discuss any issues
- Support the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Not discriminating on grounds of race, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, faith, disability or any other equality issues;
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school or Local Authority.

- Maintaining impartiality and ensure that personal or political beliefs do not interfere with their work or lead to the display of items that could be seen as biased or conflicting with anti-discrimination policies;

Children will:

- Listen to one another, ensuring that all peers feel heard and valued;
- Use their voice to clearly express their needs and personal views;
- Use their voice to challenge one another's opinions or behaviours when they are not inclusive or respectful;
- Adhere to the Golden Rules and the school's Core Values, both in the real world and when online, for example respecting every member of the school community and caring for the school environment;
- Use strategies they have been taught, such as the Zones of Regulation, to manage their emotions and maintain a calm learning environment;
- Develop the critical thinking skills needed to question and process information online and to stay safe in a digital age
- Participate in class discussions and debates, learning how to voice their own ideas and challenge the opinions of others respectfully;
- Work collaboratively to resolve conflicts and resisting negative peer pressure;
- Have the responsibility to act as ambassadors and role models, supporting younger children in the playground and corridors;
- Take pride in their school work and feel confident sharing items or experiences from home that they are proud of;
- Develop a sense of agency, taking responsibility for their own progress and using a growth mindset to embrace challenges;
- Participate in a wide range of cultural and religious celebrations, such as Diwali, Eid, Christmas, and Black History Month;

9. Policy Development

This policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole school community.
Staff, parents and governors have had an opportunity to input their ideas and contribute to its development.

10. Monitoring and review

The governing board will update the equality information we publish annually.
This document will be reviewed by the governing board at least every 4 years.

11. Breaches of Policy

The Old Palace & Children's House Federation views any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation as a serious act of misconduct which, in line with the Code of Conduct, may be deemed gross misconduct resulting in appropriate disciplinary action being taken.

12. Links with other Policies

This document links to the following policies:

- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Accessibility plan
- Risk assessment
- SEND Report
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs
- Admissions Policy
- Recruitment & Selection
- Grievance (Dignity at Work)
- Sickness Management

Approved:	Summer 2026
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Appendix 1: Legal Background

The core concepts and terminology in the Public Sector Duty are drawn from the Race Equality duty (RED) that was formulated in section 71 of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The wording of the RED was used later as a model for formulating the Disability Equality Duty (DED) that came into force in 2005, and for the Gender Equality Duty (GED) that came into force in 2007.

The UK Government's Equality Act 2010 restated, simplified, and, where appropriate, harmonised the various different pieces of equality legislation that had been produced over the last 40 years. The bulk of the Act came into force on 1st October 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2012 came into force at the end of May 2012. The specific duties are focused on outcomes, and encourage the integration of equality considerations in the core business of public authorities.

Auxiliary Aids

The Act extends the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. Following consultation on implementation and approach, the duty came into force on 1 September 2012.

The Equality Act 2010 (Amended 2012) has replaced all previous discrimination law. Whilst all members of the school community are protected by The Equality Act, this policy focuses mainly on our pupils, and includes our responsibilities, as outlined in the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Positive Action

The School is committed to using a range of 'Positive Action' provisions e.g. equal access to professional development, pro-actively advertising vacancies to attract more applicants from under-represented groups and providing reasonable adjustments to target specific disadvantages experienced by pupils or staff with protected characteristics.

<u>The 9 Protected Characteristics – Definition of Terms</u>

Age is a relevant characteristic, when considering our duties in our role as an employer, so that they do not experience discrimination, but not in relation to our pupils.
Our School, therefore, remains free to admit and organise children in age groups, and to treat pupils in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development, without risk of legal challenge.

Disability - Special provisions for Disability
The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in a number of ways. In particular, it works in only one direction – that is to say, it protects disabled people, but not people who are not disabled.

Our Accessibility Plan outlines how we will improve access for disabled pupils to the physical environment, increase the extent to which our disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum, and how we improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

In the Equality Act, 'disability' is defined as follows:

'A person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

Not all children with disabilities will have Special Education Needs- the Department for Education defines children with Special Education Needs as:

'Having learning difficulties or disabilities which make it harder for them to learn or access education than most other children of the same age.'

There can be a significant overlap between the two groups and a child may fall within one or more of the definitions.

The Equality Act makes it illegal to discriminate against a person with a disability for a reason related to their disability. It is also illegal to have rules, policies or practices which apply to everyone but which may disadvantage people with disabilities. Our school is required to make *reasonable adjustments* to allow children with disabilities to fully take part in the activities. These requirements are derived from the Disability Discrimination Act-

Gender Reassignment is defined in the Equality Act as applying to anyone, who is undergoing, has undergone, or is proposing to undergo a process (or part of a process) of reassigning their sex, by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Gender Identity is how a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of societal expectations of gender.

Cisgender A term which describes people whose gender identity is aligned with the sex they were assigned at birth. Cis-" is a Latin prefix meaning "on the same side as," and is therefore an antonym of "trans-."

Non-Binary A term which describes people who experience their gender identity as falling outside the categories of man and woman. Some may define their gender as falling somewhere in between man and woman, as a combination of both or as wholly different from these terms.

Trans/transgender A term which describes people whose gender identity is not aligned with the sex they are assigned at birth.

Marriage & Civil Partnership It is possible for Gay and Lesbian couples to register a civil partnership, which gives them many of the same rights as a married couple. The Equality Act of 2010 protects employees, who are in a civil partnership or marriage, against discrimination.

Pregnancy and Maternity It is unlawful for us to dismiss an employee, because they are or have been pregnant, or for reasons connected with their pregnancy or maternity leave.

Race - includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. Our school ensures that all members of our school community are not singled out for less / more favourable treatment because of their race.

Religion or Belief. The Equality Act defines "religion" as being any religion, and "belief" as any religious or philosophical belief. A lack of religion or a lack of belief are also protected characteristics.

Sex It is unlawful to discriminate against anyone because of sex.

Sexual Orientation is defined as: emotional, mental and physical attraction to someone based on their sex and/or gender in relation to your own.'

Unlawful Behaviour - Definition of terms

Direct Discrimination – treating someone less favourably than others, because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination – when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally, but has the effect of disadvantaging people with a particular protected characteristic.

Harassment – unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.
Where schools are concerned, the offence of harassment, as defined in this way in the Act, applies only to harassment because of disability, race, sex or pregnancy and maternity, and not to religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. It is very important to recognise that this does not mean that schools are free to bully or harass pupils on these other grounds - to do so would still be unlawful as well as unacceptable. Any case against the school would be on grounds of direct discrimination rather than harassment.

Victimisation – when a person is treated less favourably than they might otherwise have been, because of something they have done in connection with the Act (for example, making an allegation of discrimination, or supporting another person's complaint by giving evidence).

Institutional Discrimination
The collective failure of a school to provide an appropriate and professional service to people, because of their characteristic / difference. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance and stereotyping, which disadvantage individuals/groups.

A Racist Incident
Any incident, which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person – Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Allegations, which must be investigated

"Racism consists of conduct or words or practices, which disadvantage or advantage people, because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be subtle or overt, intentional or unwitting. It can be personal – name-calling, abuse, harassment and violence."

Discriminatory Incidents
Discrimination consists of conduct or words or practices, which disadvantage or advantage people because of their difference. It can be subtle or overt, intentional or unwitting. It can be personal – name-calling, abuse, harassment and violence.
It can be any incident, which is perceived to be discriminatory by the victim or any other person.

Association
It is also unlawful to discriminate because of a protected characteristic of another person, with whom the pupil is associated.

So, for example, a school must not discriminate by refusing to admit a pupil because his parents are gay men or lesbians. It would be race discrimination to treat a White pupil less favourably because she has a Black boyfriend.

Perception
It is also unlawful to discriminate, because of a characteristic, which you think a person has, even if you are mistaken. So, a teacher who consistently picks on a pupil for being gay will be discriminating, because of sexual orientation, whether or not the pupil is in fact gay.