



Equality Policy

Name of Headteacher:	Tom Johnston
Date Policy approved and adopted:	Feb 2026
Date Due for review:	Feb 2027

Equality at Merdon Junior School

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school. (See Initial Equality Impact Assessment)

Merdon Junior School

Equality Policy

Introduction

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of our school. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school community working together – our pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our school community and enabling an open culture.

For staff and prospective staff, this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Employment Equality Policy.

National and Legal Context

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the school community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, gender reassignment, race, sex, maternity and pregnancy, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership (applicable only to staff).

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

School Context

The number on roll is close to average.

The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, supported under pupil premium funding is below average.

The proportion of pupils at with SEN support is close to average.

The percentage of pupils with an EHC plan is just below average.

The proportion of pupils at with EAL is below average.

The school has 12 out of 19 possible ethnic groups.

Pupils come from a predominantly White British background 77%.

Principles

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value

We see all pupils, potential pupils, their parents and carers, and staff as of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their sex
- Whatever their gender identity
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or pupils may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

- Disability – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made.
- Sex – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs.

- Gender reassignment – we recognise an individual has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.
- Religion and belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with.
- Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds.
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers.
- Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference.
- Marriage and civil partnership – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have.
- Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes and interaction between groups and communities different from each other
- an absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including pupils who are affected by a policy or activity to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and

activities affecting pupils, we will take account of views expressed at school council; for parents, through parent governor representation and for staff, through staff governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum offer foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Our current equality information can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement.

9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement we have been involved in (principle 7).

The objectives can be found in Appendix B to this policy statement and take into account both national, county and school level priorities.

We will set ourselves new objectives every four years, but keep them under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- The delivery of the school curriculum
- The teaching and learning within the school
- Our practice in relation to pupil progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to pupils, their families and staff
- Our policies and practice in relation to pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers

- Our contact with the wider school community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and pupils are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The headteacher is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons
- support pupils in their class who have additional needs

Equalities Information

Appendix A

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief and sexual orientation).

We have also involved staff, pupils, parents and others in the following ways:

- Input from staff surveys and through staff meetings / INSET;
- Input from parent surveys.
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, school surveys on children's attitudes.
- Conferencing of vulnerable children and children with identified needs.
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- Use of the House system to promote community between different year groups in the school
- The school curriculum and assemblies designed to enable children to understand and respect diversity
- RE curriculum which includes learning about a range of faiths and other world views.
- Feedback at Governing body meetings.

Pupil-related data – 2024-25

	Merdon	National
Reading expected standard	Whole cohort – 74% Male – 71% Female – 76% SEN – 42% Non SEN - 82% PP eligible – 60%	All children – 75% Male – 72% Female – 78% SEN – 42% Non SEN - Unavailable PP eligible – 63%

	Not PP eligible – 76% EAL – 70% Not EAL – 74%	Not PP eligible – 81% EAL – 74% Not EAL – 76%
Writing expected standard	Whole cohort – 59% Male – 56% Female – 64% SEN – 29% Non SEN - 68% PP eligible – 50% Not PP eligible – 61% EAL – 70% Not EAL – 57%	All children – 72% Male – 66% Female – 78% SEN – 32% Non SEN - Unavailable PP eligible – 59% Not PP eligible – 78% EAL – 73% Not EAL – 72%
Maths expected standard	Whole cohort – 70% Male – 77% Female – 60% SEN – 43% Non SEN - 78% PP eligible – 50% Not PP eligible – 74% EAL – 60% Not EAL – 72%	All children – Male – 75% Female – 73% SEN – 40% Non SEN – Unavailable PP eligible – 61% Not PP eligible – 81% EAL – 78% Not EAL – 73%
RWM Combined	Whole cohort – 52% Male – 54% Female – 48% SEN – 14% Non SEN - 62% PP eligible – 30% Not PP eligible – 56% EAL – 60% Not EAL – 50%	All children – 62% Male – 59% Female – 66% SEN – 24% Non SEN - Unavailable PP eligible – 47% Not PP eligible – 69% EAL – 64% Not EAL – 62%

Staff data

As we have fewer than 150 staff, we are not legally obliged to publish staff information. Because of the small number of staff employed we choose not to publish the significant risk of individuals being identified.

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- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief and sexual orientation).

Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objective(s):

Objective 1: To monitor and analyse pupil attainment and progress by pupil groups, acting on any trends or patterns in data that require additional support for pupils.

Objective 2: To address factors which can impact on the potential attainment of those eligible for Pupil Premium, including attendance, enhanced learning support and access to a range of experiences.

Evaluation and Review

Date of Ratification	February 2026
Date for Next Review	February 2030
Comments: New policy – now standalone.	