Priors Hall – A Learning Community Equality Statement and Objectives 2025-2027

At Priors Hall – A Learning Community the spiritual, moral and cultural development of all our children is paramount. We believe that the most important function of the school is to maintain an environment in which every member of the community is able to achieve success and self-fulfilment.

There must be a total consistency of expectation that everyone (irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion or culture) should feel safe and secure; have empathy for all others; and place a high value upon individual achievement and personal development.

Section 1: Legal Framework

The equality Act (2010) is a legal framework to protect the rights of the individual from unfair treatment and promotes equality of opportunity for all in order to establish a fair and more equal society. The Public Sector Equality Duty (2011) with the Act covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender and gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity, religion and belief, sexual orientation and sexual identify, marriage and civil partnership.

The Education and Inspections Act (2006) also highlights our duty as a school to contribute to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments.

Our school also embraces the duties set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the Human Rights Act which promote working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes.

Section 2: Priors Hall – A Learning Community Values

At Priors Hall – A Learning Community we seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcomes to all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life. As a school, we are guided by the following values:

Respect

Valuing difference and diversity: appreciating the richness within our difference and promoting understanding and celebration of them.

Shared humanity: identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs, valuing fundamental similarities and university.

Fairness and social justice: reducing and removing inequalities that exist in society through staff recruitment, retention and development as well as individuality and collectively promoting a more equitable society.

Resilience

Challenge: addressing inequalities which may arise by challenging in order to ensure everyone in the school community is treated with the same value.

Kindness

Equality – eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation by promoting all members of our community have equal value.

Social cohesion: creating positive attitudes and relationships between all groups of people within our school and our local community.

Curiosity

Personal and cultural identity: providing opportunities to explore and value the complexities of our personal and cultural identities as well as consulting people and involving everyone.

Section 3: Guiding Principles

a) Eliminating Discrimination

Within Priors Hall – A Learning Community, the following actions are undertaken to eliminate any form of discrimination and prohibited conduct amongst the whole school community for the protection of its pupils and staff:

- All school policies are written to ensure equality of the pupils, staff and the wider school community and this is clearly shown within the whole school values in these key documents
- The school culture, which underpins the whole school philosophy, is shared with all stakeholders and taught within the school, promoting the key messages of equality, respect, individuality and eliminating any form of prejudice
- With the review of the Equality Statement annually, the responsibilities for each member of staff are reminded and any changes shared annually within the team meetings
- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability
- Most staff undertaking recruitment within the school have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training to ensure equality in the appointment of new members of staff adhering to recruitment and selection processes that are fair an in line with statutory duties
- Ensuring all members of staff within school receive annual performance reviews and that training and development opportunities are available to all staff, subject to budget constraints
- Admission arrangements for pupils are fair and transparent and do not discriminate on ethnicity, gender, disability or socio-economic factors

b) Advancing Equality of Opportunity

Priors Hall - a learning community believes that it is important to ensure we have a shared view of advancing equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics as well as those that do not share it.

We undertake this in the following ways:

- Equality objectives are written to provide clear vision and focused action to reduce inequality and provide specific support to individuals and groups of pupils
- Behavioural incidents, including bullying and racist incidents, are recorded on the schools tracking system (CPOMS) with the actions undertaken also recorded. These are analysed

by a key member of staff in order to look for trends and patterns. These trends and patterns are discussed at safeguarding meetings and actions are noted.

- PSHE (Personal Social Health Education), RE and RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) areas of the curriculum regularly address ideas of equality through understanding, friendship and sharing an understanding of a range of religions, cultures and differences. These areas are monitored by the school's Personal Development Lead.
- A wide-ranging enrichment programme of the curriculum, including visits and clubs that are open to all children, making reasonable adjustments where necessary
- Assemblies within the school give opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Our writing and reading curricula provide rich texts that show children a window to our diverse world and a mirror to reflect our school community's own diversities.

c) Engagement and Fostering Good Relations

Within our school values, engagement with all stakeholders is seen as fundamental and we pride ourselves on our engagement with the local community, especially those affected by the decisions we make as a school:

- We engage with a wide range of groups and individuals to ensure that the group of staff and governors that approve the policies represent the diverse community in which we live
- Our equality objectives are devised based on qualitative and quantitative data that we have collected from assessments but also staff, pupil and parent questionnaire responses
- Local community links and events are frequently placed throughout the school's calendar and are open to all, in order to foster good relationships and engage with all members of the community

Section 4: Equality Objective

We formulate and publish equality objectives using the views of parents, pupils, staff and governing body as well as sound qualitative and quantitative evidence from within the school. Our equality objectives are written for two academic years. However, we will constantly review them and we will report annually on our progress towards achieving them.

Section 5: Addressing Prejudice and Prejudice-Related Bullying

Priors Hall a learning community is opposed to and will not tolerate all forms of prejudice standing in the way of fulfilling our legal duties as detailed in the Equality Act. This includes:

- Prejudices around disabilities and special educational needs
- Prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those directed towards religious groups and communities and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices reflecting sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia

We address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses to the above.

We keep a record of all prejudice-related incidents on the school recording system (CPOMS) and, if requested, provide a report to the Trust and Local Authority about the number, type and seriousness of such incidents and how they have been dealt with in school.

Section 6: Roles and Responsibilities

a) The Role of the Governors

- The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and this statement and its related procedures are implemented
- The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils and staff
- The Governing Body seeks to ensure that that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school
- The Governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities and strive to ensure school communication is as inclusive as possible for all stakeholders
- The Governors welcome all applications to join the school regardless of the child's socio-economic background, ethnicity, gender or disability

b) The Role of the Headteacher

- The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy and ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities

- The Headteacher ensures that all recruitment panels give due regard to the plan so no one is discriminated when it comes to employment or training
- The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist, sexist, xenophobic, biphobic, homophobic or transphobic incidents with due seriousness
- The Headteacher, along with all leaders, promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and participation in school life

c) The Role of all Staff

- All staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos within their classroom and ensure all children are treated fairly
- All staff will strive to provide a curriculum and material that gives positive images based on ethnicity, gender and disability as well as challenging any stereotypes
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, sexism, racism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia and record the incidents drawing them to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team on the school monitoring system (CPOMS)
- If the concern is about a member of staff, this will be treated as a Low-Level Concern and shared with the Headteacher
- All staff will keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

Section 7: Staff Development and Training

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. This is included in statutory safeguarding training and throughout curriculum development meetings.

Section 8: Monitoring and Review

In line with legal requirements, this Equality Statement will be reviewed annually and any adaptations presented to the Governing Body. It will then be shared via the school's website and staff meetings.

Section 9: Dealing with Complaints

At Priors Hall – A Learning Community, we endeavour to get it right as we unashamedly put the needs of the pupils and staff first. Parents are positively encouraged to come into school to talk about any aspect of their child's education. Initial contact is usually made through the child's class teacher, and in the vast majority of cases, concerns or anxieties are usually resolved at this stage. However, if this fails and a parent wishes to make a formal complaint, the Trust and Governing Body has published guidelines for parents detailing the necessary stages in the formal complaints procedure which is available on the school's website.

Section 10: Safeguarding

At Priors Hall – A Learning Community, safeguarding and child protection is paramount and we believe that students have the right to learn in a supportive, caring environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; where staff are vigilant for signs of any student in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems. If any behaviour is a concern, Priors Hall – A Learning Community procedures and processes will be followed at all times in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Any concerns will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Designated Safeguarding Officers.

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- **To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding through a rich range of experience, both in and beyond the school.**

  - We have a uniform policy, which does not specify uniform by gender
  - We have trained three Youth Mental Health First Aiders, including two Senior Leaders and a Pastoral Lead

- Weekly My Happy Mind sessions have been introduced into all of our classrooms to provide children with strategies they may need to regulate and look after their own mental health
- Greater use of the student leadership group (JLT) on particular equality related issues in school, including school values and school uniform
- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We employ a pastoral lead who is a trained supervisor and ensures all of our SEND TAs have termly supervision
- We have trained our Pastoral Lead as an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant who is supervised by the Educational psychologists at North Northants council
- Our Headteacher is a trained Senior Mental Health Lead
- We work in association with Education Mental Health Practitioners who work with our children on a 1:1 or group level following referral.
- We ensure that appropriate referrals are made to external agencies such as ACEs to support our children in a timely manner.
- We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

- **To reduce prejudice and increase understanding of equality through direct teaching across the curriculum.**

- Our Personal Development Lead and Headteacher have worked alongside the Trust to implement a broad and balanced RSE curriculum, which has had a successful parental consultation
- We teach about difference, diversity, and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE, RSE and across our core and wider curriculum.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We have featured on the 'Diversity Symposium' in Milton Keynes; showcasing our 'Speed Faithing' event which has raised awareness of, and celebrated, all of the religions and beliefs of children in our school.
- School leadership team and Pastoral Lead have worked with an LGBTQ+ charity to ensure that the school provides teaching to increase the level of understanding of transgender children amongst our cohorts.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability. We avoid stereotyping.

- We arrange regular workshops for children from external providers where appropriate. Such as 'show racism the red card' and anti-bullying workshops.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences
- Staff provide weekly opportunities to discuss picture news, these cover all protected characteristics throughout the year and children are aware of these.

- **To ensure that all pupils are given similar opportunities with regards to after-school clubs and enrichment activities.**

- All children have access to the same after school clubs
- the school minibus is available to ensure all children get enrichment experiences
- A range of after school clubs are provided which cater for a wide range of interests, e.g. sport, languages, films, colouring etc, and where possible, pupils and parents can contribute to decision making process of which clubs are offered.
- Pupil Premium eligible families are supported in funding enrichment and after school clubs.
- There are free places for pupil premium children on clubs and residentials and trips
- Pupil Premium Strategy clearly outlines where funding is used strategically to ensure that eligible children have access to enrichment opportunities across the curriculum.

- All children go on school trips and adjustments are made where there are additional needs to consider so that all children can participate and enjoy all external visits

- **Narrow the attainment gap between those children considered to be 'disadvantaged' and those who are not.**

- From January 2024, our new data tracking systems have enabled teachers to focus even more precisely on identifying and addressing gaps in progress between identified groups, such as 'disadvantaged' and their peers.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able". We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.
- We use the language 'previously lower attainer' or 'previously higher attainer'
- We have regular pupil progress meetings led by our assessment lead to identify and provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving.
- Assistant Headteacher is taking an active role and is leading inclusion, working alongside classroom teachers to ensure that inclusion category children (PP, SEND, EAL, bottom 20% and More Able) are supported and challenged effectively.

- Our Whole Class Reading approach and our Pathways to Write is centred in providing cultural capital, supporting all pupils in learning about a wider range of topics and themes to broaden vocabulary and pupil experience. These learning experiences support bridging gaps that disadvantaged pupils can face in their knowledge and experience of the world.

• **To allow equal access to information for all parents.**

- We have clear policy and procedure to follow in which parents can request information of their child's records – this is overseen by the Head of Compliance at IFTL. The policy is available on our website or a printed version can be supplied via the school office.
- Half termly year group newsletters are sent to all parents so that they are aware of the areas of learning their children are undertaking. On ClassDojo these messages can be electronically translated into home languages so that parents who do not speak English fluently can access.
- Parents who do not live with their children receive an additional copy of correspondence so that they are up-to-date with their child's progress.

• **To ensure the school environment is accessible to all pupils, staff and visitors.**

- maintained the lift in the community centre.
- worked alongside any stakeholders with disability to ensure that all they need is in place, on an individual basis - Disabled toilets are available throughout the school
- SENDCo regularly reviews the access arrangements of the school alongside the DSL and Site Supervisor to ensure that the needs of all children, staff and visitors can be met.