



Equality and Diversity policy

Signed on behalf of Governors:

Agreed: Autumn 2024

Review: Autumn 2026

Equality Statement

At Footprints Federation, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers irrespective of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual orientation, age or socio-economic background. We are determined to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality and protective characteristics, challenging bullying and stereotypes and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

We believe that diversity is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

Teaching and learning

We provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed and to reach the highest level of personal achievement.

- Ensuring equality of access for all pupils and preparing them for life in a diverse society
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community without stereotyping
- Promoting attitudes and values that challenge any discriminatory behaviour or prejudice
- Providing opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Seeking to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Utilising teaching approaches appropriate for the whole school population which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

Equality in Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent and do not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, religion, belief, disability and/or socio-economic background.

Equal Opportunities for Staff and Governors

All staff and governor appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability, in compliance with the law. We are keen to ensure that the staffing and governance of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

1 Introduction

The Footprints Federation is committed to valuing diversity by providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families. We also value our staff and are committed to good employment practice.

The Footprints Federation seeks to ensure that no member of the school community, or any person through their contact with the school, will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic. These include: race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, living situation, or spent convictions.

In this we include all members of the extended school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents / carers and others from our local community. Partners, contractors and other visitors to the school are also expected to adhere to this policy.

2 Legal Framework

In putting together this Single Equality Scheme in the form of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, we are responding to the introduction of the Equality Act 2010. This replaces all previous policies and legislation relating to Race Equality, Gender Equality and Disability Equality.

This policy has been devised to enable The Footprints Federation to meet its general duty in:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Fostering good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not

We do this by:

- Providing a secure environment in which all of our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued
- Including and valuing the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity
- Providing positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and people with disabilities
- Reviewing our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti- discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity
- Making inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of The Footprints Federation

3 Aim

Equality and Diversity is about making a difference to the lives of the people we serve, treating all people with dignity and respect, and recognising the value of each individual and their protective characteristics. We are committed to ensuring that our services meet the varied and individual needs of children and young people in our schools, that our employment practices are fair and promote equality and that we respect the wide variety of lifestyles and cultures, locally and nationally.

We aim to prepare children and young people for living within a diverse society with increasing global connections and controversial issues.

We work hard to build strong and trusting relationships with our pupils and their families in order to harness their engagement and enjoyment in all aspects of school life. We recognise that pupils and family members may experience a range of different needs during different times in their lives and we endeavour to meet these needs by working in close partnership with relevant agencies.

4 Our Ethos

The Footprints Federation is a welcoming and caring community of children, parents/carers, staff and governors. Together we strive to provide a happy and supportive environment in which the unique potential in every child is realised and we allow all to “be the best they can be.”

5 Guiding Principles

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

All learners and potential learners are of equal value and benefit equally from school policies, practices and programmes, whatever their ability, ethnicity or national identity, religious background, gender or cultural identity.

Principle 2: Relevant differences are recognised

Treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Policies, practices and programmes do not discriminate, but may be differentiated to take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability – so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity – so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender – so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- Religion, belief or faith background
- Sexual identity

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes, relationships and a shared sense of belonging

Policies and programmes promote:

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: Staff recruitment, retention and development

Steps are taken to positively promote equality, especially where there is evidence of inequality and to ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in recruitment, professional development and promotion:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

Principle 5: Reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of policies and programmes, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist between:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men

Principle 6: Policy development involves widespread consultation and involvement

People affected by a policy are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. Such consultation is both direct and through representative organisations, and is based on principles of transparency and accountability. It involves those who in the past have been excluded or disadvantaged, and who continue to face barriers:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled people
- from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, and girls and boys
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender persons or gender neutral

Principle 7: Society as a whole benefits

Policies and programmes benefit society as a whole, locally, nationally and internationally, by fostering greater cohesion and greater participation in public life for:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled people
- from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, and girls and boys
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender persons or gender-neutral

6 Implementation

Admissions

- The Footprints Federation welcomes applications from the whole community. We base our admissions policy on a fair system (refer to Admissions Policy)
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our school, on the basis of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, political activities, socioeconomic background, living situation, being a member of a travelling community or an asylum seeker or having spent convictions
- We discourage discriminatory behaviour by children, staff, governors or parents and will take appropriate action where necessary
- Displaying of openly racist insignia, distribution of racist material, name-calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the school premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner in accordance with our unacceptable behaviour policy for adults or behaviour policy for children
- We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to our school because of any disability as long as the building and environment meets their needs.
- We have ensured that action plans are developed for children and Parents / Carers with disabilities so that they can participate successfully in the activities offered by The Footprints Federation School and in the curriculum offered
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether written or spoken

School Curriculum

The curriculum offered at The Footprints Federation encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves.

Equality and diversity are embedded as far as possible in all areas of the curriculum and pupils are given opportunities to explore prejudice and discrimination, and to positively explore difference in relation to race/ethnicity, religion/belief, gender, disability.

We do this by:

- Making children feel valued and good about themselves through the curriculum, assemblies, pastoral times and our well-developed and tested PSE curriculum
- Ensuring that children have equal access to learning
- Recognising the different learning styles of children, making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities
- Regularly reviewing the teaching within each subject area as well as with the resources that are available to support this so that both the diversity of the school, local community and wider society as a whole are represented in this
- Avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials but also understanding that sometimes these materials may be used as a teaching point – e.g. around bullying.
- Celebrating a wide range of festivals
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable
- Ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities
- Ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning
- Data is collected with regard to the attainment and achievement of all pupils in order to inform the planning and provision of support to individuals and groups of pupils
- We recognise the specific assessment needs of pupils with additional needs such as EAL, SEN, Socio economic vulnerabilities, gender differences etc, and also the importance of scrutinising assessment materials for bias. We recognise that often we minimise difference within school but national test materials do not always take account of this. We try to prepare children where possible for this by giving them a wide range of experiences to draw upon.

Valuing Diversity in Families

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work with all families
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life through the curriculum
- We encourage Parents / Carers/carers to take part in the life of The Footprints Federation and to contribute fully
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we try to develop plans to ensure their full inclusion
- We offer a flexibility of payments for families of differing means and offer information regarding sources of financial support

Food and Dietary Needs

- We work in partnership with Parents / Carers to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met as far as is reasonably possible
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them

Events

- Events are arranged to ensure that all families may become involved in the life of the school if they wish
- Information about events and meetings is communicated in a variety of ways (e.g. electronically, written and verbal), to ensure that all Parents / Carers have information about, and access to, the meetings

Staff Training

- All staff at The Footprints Federation will have their professional development needs met in relation to this agenda. This includes staff across all sections (teaching, support, mid-days, office staff, etc) and support that will be provided to meet their training needs as outlined in each School Improvement Plan. New and temporary staff will be made aware of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and other practices in relation to this.
- We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all children to flourish
- We review our practices annually to ensure that we are fully implementing our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

7 Roles and Responsibilities

All who are associated with The Footprints Federation have a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion, and avoiding unfair discrimination.

Governors:

- Provide leadership and drive for the development and regular review of the school's policies
- Provide leadership and ensure the accountability of the school leadership for the communication and implementation of school policies
- Highlight good practice and promote it throughout the school and wider community
- Provide appropriate role models for staff, pupils, Parents / Carers and all other stakeholders
- Congratulate examples of good practice from a school
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Ensure that the schools carry out the letter and the spirit of the statutory duties
- Making sure the school complies with all current equality legislation
- Making sure this policy and its procedures are followed
- Making sure that the school has up-to-date Equality Schemes and Action Plans

Headteachers:

- Initiate and oversee the development and regular review of equality policies and procedures
- Consult pupils, staff and stakeholders in the development and review of the policies
- Ensure the effective communication of the policies to all pupils, staff and stakeholders
- Ensure that staff are trained as necessary to carry out the policies
- Oversee the effective implementation of the policies
- Hold subject leaders accountable for effective policy implementation
- Provide appropriate role models for all staff and pupils
- Provide opportunities and mechanisms for the sharing of good practice Take appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination and ensure a consistent response to incidents e.g. bullying case, homophobic and racist incidents
- Ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties effectively

Staff:

- Proactively following this policy and any associated guidelines
- Providing role models for pupils through their own actions
- Dealing with racist, sexist and homophobic incidents, and recognising and tackling other forms of bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equality and good community relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic circumstances
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities offered to them

Pupils:

- Treating others kindly and fairly without prejudice, discrimination or harassment
- Attending and engaging in their own learning as well as helping other pupils to learn
- Telling staff about any prejudiced related incidents that occur.

Parents / Carers / Carers:

- Supporting our schools in the implementation of this policy
- Following the school policy through their own behaviour
- Ensuring their children attend and engage in the learning
- Telling staff about any prejudice related incidents that occur

Visitors and Contractors:

- Knowing and following our policy

8 Overseeing the Policy

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with a named member of staff and a named Governor. Responsibilities include:

- Co-ordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents)
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of vulnerable groups of pupils (e.g. Black and minority ethnic pupils)
- Monitoring exclusion

9 Breaches of the Policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Head teachers and Governing Body. Anyone wishing to make a complaint should do so through the headteacher of each school who will follow the Federation Complaints Procedure. Racial incidents will be recorded and reported to the Local Authority following established procedures and guidelines.

10 Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of the monitoring and evaluation procedure, we will monitor:

- The attainment of pupils with protected characteristics and those from vulnerable groups and address any issues of differential progress and achievement
- The exclusion and other aspects of the behaviour management system by protected characteristics
- The Quality of Education; to ensure all pupils' needs are met irrespective of their background and that challenging targets are set for all
- The curriculum and teaching resources to ensure that pupils' experiences are broadened and they are prepared for life in a diverse society within the constraints of the National Curriculum.
- The protected characteristic composition of the school's staff and Governors, with the aim of presenting positive role models and reflecting the diversity in wider society
- Incidents of racist and homophobic behaviour and the way the school handles and reports them
- The way in which the school is sensitive to, and meets the needs of all stakeholders, paying particular regard to cultural, religious historical, ethnic and/or linguistic heritages
- The way in which the school uses the diversity within its local and wider communities to enrich learning experiences for pupils

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored annually and reviewed every three years in the light of experiences and best practice. This mechanism recognises that changes to legislation might require a review of the policy before the three years stipulated.

In considering the effectiveness of this policy consultation will be undertaken with staff, Governors, pupils and Parents / Carers to assist in this review process.