






EMERGE SCHOOL

Equal Opportunities Policy 2025 - 2026

 **Our Vision:** *A culture rooted in safety, where people feel seen, heard, included, and connected through authentic relationships.*

 **Our Mission:** *To create a safe and nurturing environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging, is empowered in their growth and learning, and is encouraged to embrace who they are and who they aspire to become.*

 **Our Values:** *At Emerge School, our values are the foundation of who we are, how we work, and what we believe in. They shape how we support young people and how we support each other.*

We are proud to uphold these four core values:



Voice: *empowering every voice to speak, shape and be heard*



Connection: *rooted in relationships, thriving through authenticity*



Growth: *evolving with purpose, innovating with heart*



Inclusion: *where every story begins, and every person matters*

Excel & Emerge Care was created to give children and young people with complex needs a safe, supportive place to grow and heal. Through residential care, education, and therapeutic support, we build stability, trust, and a future where children and young people can truly flourish

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1. OUR ETHOS, VISION AND VALUES

- Everyone matters and everyone is special within our school, and we are committed to achieving the best for all.
- Every child deserves to be the best they can be.
- We will ensure that the needs of all pupils are at the heart of all we do.
- We will provide a caring and nurturing environment in which children can flourish.
- We will ensure that our school is a safe and well-organised environment for everyone.
- We will provide a fun-loving, happy and stimulating place to learn.
- We will inspire children to learn through creative, exciting and relevant learning experiences underpinned by high quality teaching and individualised, contextual learning.
- We will provide a supportive structure for pupils, staff and parents where everyone is valued.
- We will lead by example, displaying a positive, approachable and professional manner at all times.
- We believe in Charitable Acts—If you want to feel good, then do good! We will endeavour to support local and national charities throughout the year to help support our community and raise awareness of issues close to both our staff and pupils.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The Equality Act 2010 introduces a Public Sector Equality Duty that replaces all previous equality duties on race, disability and gender. Emerge School's Equality Opportunities Policy discloses how we meet the requirements of the duty:

Within Emerge School we are required to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct, including harassment 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 and between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

3. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, requires schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives.

This document is also based on the Department for Education (DfE) advice for schools on the Equality Act, the technical guidance for schools from the Equality and Human Rights Commission and guidance from the Government Equalities Office on meeting the specific duties that support the public sector equality duty.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Our policy and scheme seeks to ensure that no member of our school community, or any person in contact with the school, receives less favourable treatment on grounds which cannot be justified. This includes the protected characteristics within The Equality Act 2010:

- Race.
- Disability.
- Gender.
- Age.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and Civil Partnership.

We are also committed to ensure that no member of our school community, or any person in contact with the school, receives less favourable treatment in relation to socio-economic background, health, trade union membership or spent convictions.

Within Emerge School, we recognise that Equality and Diversity extends beyond meeting legal requirements and setting targets. Our aim is that all sections of society will be truly represented within our school population. All members of the school community will be valued as individuals and treated with dignity and respect. Our policy will provide protection, equality and fairness. We seek to redress any imbalances of life chances that are already present at the point of entry to our school. We will prepare our children for living in a diverse, worldwide society enabling them to value and respect others as equal individuals who belong to groups of preference/choice.

Within Emerge School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn in, work in, and visit our community. In making this assertion, we subscribe to the social model of inclusion. We, in consultation and partnership with the LA, will make reasonable adjustments in relation to teaching and learning and wider aspects of school life to make sure that the educational environment is as accessible for all.

5. INTRODUCTION

Emerge school is committed to the active promotion of pupil welfare and the promotion of equal opportunities; this is not only fundamental to the aims and ethos of the school but also in accordance with our duty to promote good values.

As a school, we welcome applications from children with diverse needs and backgrounds, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, learning difficulties, body image or social background. In this regard, the school seeks to assess individual needs to determine how best the school can respond in both learning and welfare terms.

Where the school feels it cannot meet assessed needs, it will work with parents, carers and others to find suitable alternative provision. Our primary aim is to provide good quality education and to meet the welfare needs of our pupils. This approach also enriches our community and is vital in preparing all our pupils for the world in which they will eventually live and work.

In summary, we are focused on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued for who they are and might become and can flourish.

As a specialist school, it is possible to focus on individual learning and welfare needs and enable children to be exposed to a wide range of cultural experiences whilst they are developing. All lessons and school activities provide opportunities for pupils to learn about the world around them and the situations of different people in different communities and cultures. Staff are encouraged to use lessons and activities in imaginative ways to draw out discussions and ideas about history, culture, faiths and tolerance.

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our policy/scheme principles are encompassed into all that we do within Emerge School. They are embedded within our policies, procedures and practice.

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, background, gender or cultural identity (this includes people with disabilities).

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 consider differences of life experience, outlook and background, and the barriers and disadvantages which people may face.

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

Policies and programmes promote positive attitudes and interaction, mutual respect and good relations, an absence of harassment or prejudice-related bullying between people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity (this includes people with disabilities).

Principle 4: Staff recruitment, retention and development

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

Principle 5: Current inequalities and barriers are addressed and reduced

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 people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity (this includes people with disabilities).

Principle 6: Policy development involves widespread consultation and involvement

People affected by a policy or programme 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

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

7. CODE OF CONDUCT

The Headteacher, teachers, school staff and residential care team play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the school's policy on equal opportunities. Use is made of Assemblies, PSHE, RE, Drama, Media and English and other lessons to:

- Promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the school community.
- Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.
- Foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures.
- Understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour. (See Positive Behaviour Policy).
- Understand why we will deal with any incidents where this policy is not being consistently applied promptly and sensitively.

Harassment in all its forms is unlawful and unacceptable; our Anti-Bullying and Cyber Bulling Policy contain clear procedures for dealing with such discrimination. All our staff receive anti-discrimination training. Teaching, and Residential Care staff attend regular INSET sessions on equal opportunities and the application of this policy.

A successful equal opportunities policy requires strong and positive support from parents, care workers and guardians, and full acceptance of the school's ethos of tolerance and respect.

8. MONITORING

Emerge School monitors its equal opportunities policy regularly and reports to the Directors in order to ensure its effectiveness in day-to-day practice. As part of that process, we invite all parents/carers of candidates and staff to complete an anonymous monitoring form. (The form uses the same ethnic categories as the Government uses in the national census). Completed forms are separated from any other material that might identify the individual child or adult. The purpose of monitoring is to help the school to apply this policy and adapt it as needed to ensure equal opportunities are actively promoted at all times.

9. ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

All students attending the school with EAL will receive additional support to ensure that they can access the curriculum effectively.

At Emerge school we aim

- To be proactive in removing barriers that stand in the way of our EAL learners learning and success.
- To meet our responsibilities to our EAL learners by ensuring their equal access to the National Curriculum (and other education opportunities) and the achievement of their education potential.
- To provide our EAL learners with a safe, welcoming, nurturing environment where they are accepted, valued and encouraged to participate.

- To ensure that all our EAL learners participate in the life of the school and gain access to appropriately planned and prepared specialist curriculum provision.
- To ensure that our EAL learners attain National Curriculum levels and public examination grades appropriate to their abilities.
- To seek, and make use of, appropriate advice, guidance, support and training.
- To assess and monitor progress of our EAL learners' acquisition of English; of their general achievement and of their attainment in public examinations/end of key stage assessment.

Objectives – Learners

- To give EAL learners the knowledge and skills to use spoken English to communicate with others in a variety of curriculum and social contexts.
- To give EAL learners the knowledge and skills to use English to understand and produce written texts.
- To give EAL learners the skills and confidence to use a variety of strategies to enhance understanding and to express meaning clearly.

Underlying Principles

1. Our EAL learners are entitled to opportunities for educational success that are equal to those of our English-speaking learners.
2. EAL learners are not a homogenous group; their needs vary according to a range of factors. We aim to provide a range of teaching and learning activities to meet curriculum demands and different learning needs/styles.
3. Well-planned, mainstream lessons in appropriately organised mainstream classrooms provide the best environment for acquisition of English by EAL learners.
4. The multi-linguicism of our EAL learners enriches our school and our community.
5. To become fully competent in the use of curriculum/academic English is a long process; learners require long-term support.
6. Having a home language other than English is not a “learning difficulty”. EAL learners are not placed on the SEN register or taught in a lower ability class unless they have special educational needs.

10. REQUESTS FOR VARIATION IN THE SCHOOL UNIFORM

We welcome pupils of all faiths and offer the opportunity for all children to practice their own faiths. However, parents and carers should be aware that all pupils are required to wear the school's uniform.

The Headteacher will consider written requests from parents/carers for variations in the uniform on religious grounds and may take external advice and will normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

Disability

The school will conduct disability and access assessments of the school to comply with current legislation relating to the rights of people with a disability. The school will work with parents, carers and agencies to help pupils with disabilities and specific needs and to enable them to enjoy the benefits of school life.

11. COMPLAINTS (See school complaints policy)

Everyone in the school has a responsibility to ensure that this policy is fully implemented in the interests of our pupils. If any issues are raised these will be dealt with in accordance with this policy. Additionally, parents, carers and pupils have the right to use the complaints process to raise any specific concerns, and these will be fully investigated without delay.

12. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Responsible Individual has responsibility to:

- Receive, accept, monitor and evaluate their implementation the school's equality objectives.
- Make sure the school complies with the relevant equality legislation.
- Make sure the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed.
- Monitor progress towards the equality objectives and reporting annually.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure steps are taken to address the school's stated equality objectives.
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out.
- Providing equal opportunity and accessibility to staff training and courses appropriate to professional development, responsibilities and statutory requirements. This includes staff meeting and internal training sessions when needed.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including prejudice-related incidents.
- Enabling reasonable adjustments to be made, in relation to disability, regarding students, staff, parents / carers and visitors to the school.
- Dealing with reports of prejudice-related incidents.

All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting equality and community cohesion in their work.
- Avoiding unlawful discrimination against anyone.
- Fostering good relations between groups.
- Dealing with prejudice-related incidents.
- Recognising and tackling bias and stereotyping.
- Taking up training and learning opportunities in terms of professional development, responsibilities and statutory requirements.
- Taking steps to ensure that the needs of individuals are met, even if this means more favourable treatment.

13. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

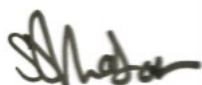
As a school, we carry out rigorous monitoring and analysis of all pupils and their progress so that SLT, subject leaders and class teachers can use the information to ensure the appropriate progress is made by all pupils regardless of race, disability, socio-economic background, belief or gender. Through analysis we are aware of any groups or individuals who are not making at least expected progress. Evidence of this analysis can be found in our regular reporting documentation.

Equality Objectives

To embed the guiding principles within the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.
Ensure that the staff and all partners are aware of current legislation and their roles and responsibilities surrounding Equality and Diversity.
To develop community cohesion.
Ensure that the curriculum is personalised for individual and group needs including reasonable adjustments, reflecting religious, ethnic diversity and children's interests.
To ensure that the school (indoors and outdoors) and curriculum (including extra-curricular clubs) is fully accessible for ALL children.

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Next Review	February 2027
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Approved by:



Headteacher:

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