

Thirsk Community Primary School Equality Scheme and Action Plan



Three-year period covered by this scheme: 2026- 2028

Date of creation: December 2023

Date of Policy Adoption Governing Body: December 2026

Date for next Review: December 2026

1.1 Purpose of the Equality Scheme This equality scheme is the school's response to the specific and general duties in the current equality legislation. It is an attempt to capture how the school is systematically establishing and implementing good practice in equality and diversity across all areas of school life. This includes a response to all aspects of social identity and diversity as set out in the North Yorkshire County Council's Equality Policy Statement: "We oppose all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination, whether because of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex or gender reassignment, marital status, family status, sexuality, religion or beliefs, disability, age or any other condition or requirement which places a person at a disadvantage and cannot be justified".

This Equality Scheme sets out how the school will:

- eliminate discrimination;
- eliminate harassment related to any aspect of social identity or diversity
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote positive attitudes to all aspects of social identity and diversity
- encourage participation by disabled people and people representing different aspects of social identity in public life
- take steps to take account of difference even where that involves treating some people more favourably than others.

This document provides, therefore, a scheme which embraces for our school a Race Equality Scheme, a Gender Equality Scheme, a Disability Equality Scheme and the school's Equality Policy. It is reviewed every three years and reported on annually.

An action plan accompanies this Equality Scheme which is renewed annually. In line with this Equality Scheme, the action plan sets out the equality and diversity objectives for the school which have been identified because of the school's equality impact assessment in line with this equality scheme and facilitated by the Inclusion Quality Mark audit tool.

This action plan embraces the Accessibility Plan for the school as it sets out how the school will increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Disability Discrimination Act:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

This action plan is available from the school's main office. It is available in different formats and in different languages on request to the school office.

1.2 Equality Legislation

This equality scheme responds to the current equalities' legislation:

Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976/2000 statutory positive duty to promote racial equality, promote good race relations and eliminate unlawful racial discrimination

Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1975 (and Regulations 1999), Gender Equality Duty 2007 statutory positive duty to promote gender equality and eliminate unlawful gender discrimination

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful for schools to discriminate against a person based on a protected characteristic, including religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This applies to discrimination:

- a) in the terms on which a school offers to admit a pupil;
- b) by refusing to accept an application for admission; and
- c) where a pupil is already on roll, by:
 - i) the way the school provides access to education, benefits, facilities or services;
 - ii) refusing access to education, benefits, facilities or services;
 - iii) subjecting the pupil to any other detriment; or
 - iv) excluding the pupil.

There are limited and specific exemptions within the Equality Act for faith schools, which are applied in accordance with the law.

Disability Equality

Under the Equality Act 2010, schools have a statutory duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to disability, and to advance equality of opportunity for disabled people.

This duty applies to pupils, staff, parents, carers and others who use, or may wish to use, the school. The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments, removing barriers to learning and participation, and ensuring that disabled individuals are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

In fulfilling this duty, the school seeks to promote inclusion, independence and full participation in all aspects of school life

In line with the Equality Act 2010 and our wider responsibilities as a school, we are committed to promoting community cohesion and fostering a strong sense of belonging for all. Community cohesion is understood as working towards a society in which there is a shared vision and sense of belonging, where diversity of background and circumstance is valued, equal life opportunities are available to all, and positive relationships are developed within school and the wider community.

Through our curriculum, values and daily practice, including the use of the Kapow curriculum, we actively promote mutual respect, understanding and inclusion. Kapow provides planned opportunities for pupils to explore diversity, develop empathy, think critically and learn about life in modern Britain. This enables pupils to build the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute positively and responsibly to their local, national and global communities.

What kind of a school are we?

2.1 School Vision and Values

The school's vision and values set out high ambitions for all pupils and reflect our commitment to inclusion. Our curriculum meets the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement by providing appropriate challenge, responding to different learning needs and removing barriers to learning and assessment. We follow the North Yorkshire Inclusion Statement by identifying pupils who may be vulnerable to exclusion or underachievement and providing targeted support to ensure their presence, participation and success. The school is committed to achieving the Inclusion Quality Mark and to continually strengthening inclusive practice.

School Vision Statement

‘Creating an inspiring learning community, which allows every person to thrive, achieve their full potential and shape a brighter future’

At Thirsk Primary School, we are committed to creating an inspiring learning community where compassion, inclusion and ambition are at the heart of everything we do. We believe that every member of our school community is unique and deserves to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

We promote inclusion by ensuring that all children and adults feel welcomed, valued and supported, and by removing barriers so that everyone has equal access to learning and opportunity. Through compassion, we foster kindness, understanding and care for others, particularly those who may be vulnerable, helping to create a safe and nurturing environment where everyone belongs.

We are ambitious for all. We hold high expectations and encourage every individual to believe in themselves, develop resilience and strive to achieve their full potential. We actively challenge discrimination and prejudice, celebrate diversity and work together to shape a positive, respectful community where everyone can thrive and build a brighter future.

2.2 School Context

The nature of the school population and context to inform action planning for the equality scheme:

The school is situated in an area of significant need – as identified in the English Indices of Deprivation 2025.

The school has several pupils with English as a second language as well pupils from the Traveller Community

The school has pupils where there are potential barriers to learning these include pupils that have sensory impairments and neurodiversity as well as long term medical conditions

At the time of writing there are 54 pupils identified in receipt of the Pupil Premium

The school regularly monitors and supports pupils to ensure equality and inclusion across gender, ethnicity, disability, faith background and identified areas of vulnerability. This is informed through the analysis of a range of information, including attainment and progress data (such as end of key stage outcomes), participation and achievement in extra-curricular and extended school activities, attendance and exclusion data, and involvement in school trips and enrichment opportunities. This monitoring helps the school to identify and address barriers, ensuring all pupils are supported to achieve and participate fully in school life.

Assemblies and the wider curriculum are rooted in British Values, which are woven into daily school life and reflect the needs and experiences of our school and local community. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on these values regularly through learning, discussion and shared experiences.

The school carefully plans all on-site and off-site activities, as well as day-to-day provision, to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to meet the needs of all pupils. Examples of adjustments include differentiated learning resources, accessible classroom layouts, the use of visual supports, assistive technology, hearing or visual aids, and tailored support during trips and activities. When developing the school site, Governors consider future needs to ensure that all areas remain fully accessible to every member of the school community.

Thirsk Community Primary School is committed to equality of opportunity for all – this is demonstrated in all appointments, pay, performance management, induction and professional development, and disciplinary processes.

2.3 Responsibilities The Governing Body and School Leadership Team will:

- be proactive in promoting equality and tackling discrimination in all areas
- maintain an overview of the Equalities Scheme which will be a regular agenda item at governor meetings and ensure that all staff, parents and pupils adhere to it
- work in partnership with others to tackle discrimination, and establish, promote and disseminate good practice in equalities
- encourage, support and enable all pupils and staff to reach their full potential

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school complies with all relevant equalities' legislation (see para. 1.2); ensuring, with assistance from the Headteacher, that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented
- Electing a nominated governor with responsibility for Equalities who, with the Headteacher, will report to the full governing body

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- co-ordinating all equality work within the school⁴
- ensuring that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented on a day to day basis
- ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy and that they are given appropriate training and support to enable them to fulfil these responsibilities
- initiating disciplinary action against staff or pupils who discriminate

- dealing with reported incidents of racism, harassment or other forms of discrimination.

People with specific responsibilities

- The co-chairs of Governors, Miss Deuchars, Mrs Greenway and Miss A Scholes (SENDCo) are responsible for maintaining a record of and sharing with all the staff those vulnerable pupils and how their needs will be met
- Mr Jake Harrison (Headteacher) is responsible for ensuring the specific needs of staff members are addressed
- Miss A Scholes (SENCo) and Mrs N Kennedy (Safeguarding, Inclusion and Pastoral Manager) are responsible for gathering and analysing the information on outcomes of vulnerable pupils and staff (see para. 2.2).
- Mr Jake Harrison (Headteacher) is responsible for monitoring the response to reported incidents of a discriminatory nature; [?]
- Mrs N Kennedy (Safeguarding, Inclusion and Pastoral Manager) is responsible for co-ordinating the Inclusion Quality Mark equality impact assessment.
- SENDCO is responsible for maintaining and sharing with all the staff those vulnerable pupils and how their needs will be met

All staff should:

- know how to deal with incidents of concern, and how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping; [?]
- know procedures for reporting incidents of racism, harassment or other forms of discrimination; [?]
- not discriminate on racial, disability or other grounds; [?]
- keep themselves up to date with relevant legislation and attend training and information events organised by the school or LA; [?]
- ensure that pupils from all groups are included in all activities and have full access to the curriculum; [?]
- promote equality and diversity through teaching and through relations with pupils, staff, parents, and the wider community.

All pupils will:

- learn about and understand the school's Equality Scheme and be expected to behave in accordance with it
- experience a curriculum and environment which is respectful of diversity and difference and prepares them well for life in a diverse society
- understand the importance of reporting discriminatory bullying and racially motivated incidents

Visitors and contractors are responsible for complying with the school's Equality Scheme – non-compliance will be dealt with by the Headteacher.

3.1 Involvement

Policies are important, but they are not the end goal—they are part of an ongoing process that changes and improves as the school learns what works best. This Equality Scheme is developed through the involvement of everyone in our school community, including pupils, parents, staff, governors and local agencies.

By listening to the views of different groups, the school can understand the barriers some people face and take practical steps to remove them. This Scheme is informed by:

- Pupils' views and experiences from different backgrounds
- Parents' perspectives and aspirations for their children
- Staff experiences and ideas
- Input from members of the local community and external agencies
- Priorities in the North Yorkshire Children and Young People's Plan

Through this process, we aim to make the school inclusive, fair and supportive for everyone.

3.2 Mechanisms for Involvement

At Thirsk Primary School, we use a range of ways to make sure the views of pupils, staff, parents and the wider community inform our Equality Scheme and action plan.

For pupils:

- Exit interviews when leaving the school

- Individual discussions with pupils involved in incidents of a discriminatory nature
- Individual discussions with pupils who receive reasonable adjustments

For staff:

- Exit interviews when leaving the school
- Regular meetings with union representatives
- Staff meetings with specific agenda items on equality and inclusion
- Individual discussions as part of performance management

For parents and the community:

- Opportunities to give feedback on support for your child, e.g., letters in large print or other languages, wheelchair access, phone explanations, or discussions with a staff member of the same gender
- Feedback through Governing Body meetings
- Feedback through PTA meetings
- Input from adults using the school outside of normal hours
- Annual open meetings with parents and local community groups

The school's action plan will focus on developing involvement from pupils, staff and parents from all backgrounds over the three years of this Scheme. We will vary times, methods and venues to make sure as many people as possible can participate. By listening and learning, we aim to improve how everyone's views shape our school and our equality work over time.

4 Making it happen

4.1 Implementation of the Policy

This Equality Scheme is supported by an action plan, which sets out the school's equality objectives and is monitored and evaluated by the Governing Body. The action plan includes:

- Clear responsibilities for staff and governors
- Allocation of resources, both staff and financial
- Timescales for each action
- Expected outcomes and ways to measure success
- Scheduled review dates

The effectiveness of the Scheme is evaluated through:

- The School Self-Evaluation Form
- Progress towards the Inclusion Quality Mark
- Discussions with the School Improvement Partner

This ensures that the school's equality work is purposeful, monitored, and continuously improving.

4.2 Publication

This Equality Scheme is available to anyone who requests a copy. It will be displayed in the school reception and referenced in newsletters and the school prospectus.

4.3 Reporting

The school reports on this Scheme annually. Progress against the action plan is reviewed, and the impact of actions and activities is assessed. The report is made available as a separate document and through the school profile and prospectus.

If you would like this information in another language or format—such as Braille, large print, or audio—please let us know.

Aby otrzymać te informacje w innym języku lub formacie, np. w alfabecie Brajla, w wersji dużym drukiem lub audio, prosimy się z nami skontaktować.

Staff Sign-Off

Name: Jake Harrison – Headteacher

Date: January 2026

Appendix 1 – Accessibility Plan

Key Area	What We Will Do	Who's Responsible	When	How We Will Know It's Working
1. Inclusion & Participation	Track pupil achievement by gender, ethnicity, disability, faith, and vulnerability- Review and increase participation in	SLT, Class Teachers	Termly	Narrowing of attainment gaps- Higher participation for underrepresented groups- Reduced attendance/exclusion differences

	clubs, trips, and enrichment- Provide targeted support where needed			
2. British Values & Social Understanding	Embed British Values across lessons and assemblies- Use Kapow curriculum to teach respect, empathy, and responsibility- Encourage daily reflection on values	SLT, PSHE Lead, Class Teachers	Ongoing, reviewed annually	- Pupil surveys show understanding- Observations show respectful, inclusive behaviour- Pupils can explain values in school/community
3. Accessibility & Reasonable Adjustments	Ensure classrooms, resources, and the site are accessible- Provide visual aids, overlays, assistive tech, hearing/visual support, differentiated resources- Check accessibility for trips and activities	SLT, SENDCo, Governors	Annual audit, termly monitoring	- Full access across school- Documented adjustments in place and used- Positive feedback from pupils/parents
4. Community & Stakeholder Engagement	Collect views from pupils, staff, parents, and local agencies via surveys, interviews, PTA/Governor meetings- Hold annual open meetings on equality- Update Equality Scheme based on feedback	SLT, Governors, Staff Leads	Annual review	More engagement in consultations- Feedback reflected in policy and actions- Evidence of improvements from stakeholder input