

The Vyne Community School Equality Policy

including Equality Statement and Objectives

September 2025

Introduction

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as anThe Vyne Community School, including all governors and staff, abiding by this Equalities Policy. We believe that the promotion of equality, diversity, and inclusion is in the best interests of our staff, students, and the wider community, and that all forms of discrimination are unacceptable, whether or not they were intended.

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body and the Headteacher to ensure that the school and its staff adhere to this Equalities Policy.

Approval and Review

- This Policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher.
- This Policy was agreed by the Governors on: September 2025.
- This Policy is due for review by: September 2028.

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.

Principles and Commitment

Our Commitment

The Vyne Community School is committed to equal opportunity and values diversity. We will challenge prejudice and intolerance and seek to eliminate discrimination.

We comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). In line with these, we will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by law.
- 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 aim to create a culture that:
- Respects and values differences.
- Promotes dignity, equality, and diversity.
- Enables and encourages individuals to develop and achieve their full potential.

By understanding the effect of our policies and actions on different people, and how inclusive practices give everyone fair opportunities, we ensure that our services are efficient, effective, and equitable.

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

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value
2. We recognise and respect difference
3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging
4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff
5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist
6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard
7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion
8. We base our practices on sound evidence
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 A to this policy statement and take into account both national, county and school level priorities.

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in the actions to be carried out. The school will take every possible step to ensure individuals are treated fairly in employment and in their access to education. Measures include:

- a) For students: implementation of policies on equal opportunities, including race and gender equality, SEND, behaviour, and anti-bullying.
- b) For staff: implementation of policies on equal opportunities, recruitment and selection, pay, and anti-harassment.
- c) Curriculum: ensuring PSHE, RSE, and other elements promote acceptance and not just tolerance, respect, and understanding of cultures, lifestyles, and beliefs.
- d) Accessibility: employing specialist staff to support students with SEND or disabilities, and implementing the school's Disability Access Plan.
- e) Monitoring: reviewing welfare, attainment, attendance, and behaviour data, with appropriate intervention and support where required.
- f) Meeting needs: taking steps to meet the particular needs of students or staff who share a protected characteristic.
- g) Objectives: setting and monitoring measurable equality objectives which are published every four years, reviewed annually.

All incidents involving discrimination or prejudice will be dealt with promptly, in line with school policies. Legal advice may be sought where appropriate.

Data relating to protected characteristics will be collected and analysed e.g. admissions, attendance, attainment, exclusions, prejudice-related incidents. Published information will not identify individuals and will comply with data protection legislation.

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 in line with our Anti Bullying Policy.

Roles and responsibilities

In line with statutory duties, the school will:

- Publish annual equality information demonstrating compliance with the Equality Duty.
- Publish at least once every four years specific, measurable equality objectives.
- Maintain and publish an Accessibility Plan to increase participation of disabled students in the curriculum, improve the physical environment, and provide accessible information.

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

Date approved by the Governing Body: September 2025

Date for policy review: September 2028

In line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), The Vyne Community School is required to prepare and publish specific and measurable equality objectives at least once every four years, and to review progress annually.

Our objectives for the period September 2025 – July 2026 are designed to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination, and foster good relations across our school community.

Objective 1: Attendance

To reduce the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers by at least 2% by July 2026.

Monitoring Activities:

- Termly analysis of attendance data by pupil group (disadvantaged, SEND, protected characteristics where data is available).
- Review of intervention strategies (mentoring, attendance panels, pastoral support).
- Reporting of progress to SLT and Governing Body Curriculum and Standards Committee.
- Student voice feedback from disadvantaged groups on barriers to attendance.

Objective 2: Leadership and Representation

To increase student participation in leadership roles (e.g. prefects, school council, committees) among under-represented groups by 10% by July 2026.

Monitoring Activities:

- Annual audit of student leadership applications and appointments by gender, ethnicity, SEND, and disadvantaged status.
- Student voice activities to gather feedback on barriers to leadership roles.
- Staff mentoring and encouragement programme for students in under-represented groups.
- Report to Governors on participation rates with year-on-year comparison.

Objective 3: Curriculum and Culture

To further embed equality, diversity, and inclusion across the curriculum, with measurable evidence of improved student understanding and attitudes by July 2026.

Monitoring Activities:

- Termly review of PSHE and RSE schemes of work to ensure coverage of equality, diversity, and protected characteristics.
- Student surveys on understanding of equality and diversity before and after curriculum units.

- Monitoring of prejudice-related incidents through safeguarding systems, with termly reports to SLT.
- Staff CPD evaluations on inclusion and cultural awareness.

Objective 4: Accessibility

To improve access to learning and the school environment for students with disabilities, in line with the school's Disability Access Plan, by July 2026.

Monitoring Activities:

- Termly review of individual SEND support plans.
- Annual audit of site accessibility (e.g. signage, ramps, toilets, lifts).
- Student and parent/carers feedback on accessibility.
- Progress reports from SENDCo to SLT and Governors.

Review and Publication

Progress towards these objectives will be:

- Reviewed termly by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Monitored annually by the Governing Body.
- Published annually in the school's Annual Equality Statement.

Date of publication: September 2025

Date for review and re-publication: September 2026

The Vyne Community School Annual Equality Statement 2025–26

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty, Department for Education guidance, and The Vyne Community School Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy, the school is required to publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty. This duty relates both to employees and to all those affected by the school's activities.

The Equality Duty requires schools to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

How The Vyne Community School is meeting the Equality Duty

We have:

- Reviewed the provision in our PSHCE, RSE, and wider curriculum to ensure it promotes tolerance, understanding, and respect for all cultures, beliefs, and lifestyles.
- Reviewed HR policies to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, including the Equality Act.
- Ensured that new buildings and refurbishments are fully accessible, with the inclusion of lifts, ramps, and accessible toilets.

We are:

- Monitoring the performance, attendance, and welfare of pupils within specific groups, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged.
- Carrying out regular student voice activities to gather views on equality and diversity. The EARA group and the Student Diversity and Inclusion Committee play an active role in shaping school practice.
- Reviewing staff and student welfare, ensuring early intervention and support when required.

We will:

- Continue to implement policies on equal opportunities (including race and gender equality, SEND, behaviour, and anti-bullying).
- Ensure the consistent application of staff policies on equal opportunities, recruitment and selection, pay, and anti-harassment.

- Employ and train specialist staff to support students with special educational needs or disabilities and continue to implement our Disability Access Plan.
- Take positive steps to meet the particular needs of students or staff who share a protected characteristic.

Equality Objectives 2025–26

In line with statutory requirements, our measurable equality objectives for this academic year are:

1. To reduce the attendance gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers by at least 2% by July 2026.
2. To increase student participation in leadership roles (e.g. prefects, school council, committees) among under-represented groups by 10% by July 2026.
3. To further embed equality, diversity, and inclusion across the curriculum, with measurable evidence of improved student understanding and attitudes by July 2026.
4. To improve access to learning and the school environment for students with disabilities, in line with the school's Disability Access Plan, by July 2026.

Monitoring and Review

Progress towards meeting the Equality Duty and these objectives is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body. Updated equality information and objectives are published every four years, in line with statutory guidance.

Date of publication: September 2025