

Thomas Coram Nursery School

Equality Policy



Thomas Coram Centre
and Nursery School
49 Mecklenburgh Square
London WC1N 2NY



Reviewed and Approved: Spring 2021	Next review: Spring 2025
Reviewed every 4 years. Goals reviewed annually.	

Purpose of the policy

The *Equality Act 2010* was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties:

A. The **Public Sector Equality Duty** or "general duty".

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

B. Two "specific duties"

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

1. Publish information to show compliance with their Equality Duty.
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years, which are specific and measurable.

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

This policy describes how Thomas Coram is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance, and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality. Thomas Coram is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the *Equality Act* provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed 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 1998*.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles:

1. All learners are of equal value. Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.

2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.

4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development

6. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential

7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils / adults to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the reasonable adjustment duty for disabled pupils/adults - designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils / adults and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

- The Head teacher ensures that all interview panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the Thomas Coram.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which has respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against children or their families by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school policy on behaviour takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We monitor absence data (children/staff) for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-based bullying

Thomas Coram challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs;
- Prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes.

We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously. We keep a record of any prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and (if necessary) would take action to reduce incidents.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our settling in and assessment procedures.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils (Nursery School) and users (Children's Centre) and use this data to support school and centre improvement. We take action to close any gaps.

We collect and analyse data:

- On the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- On those accessing *Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)*;
- On the children whose families who have social care involvement, including those who have a social worker, *Child in Need (CIN)* or *Child Protection (CP)* plan;
- On inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English.
- We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future pupils.
- 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 which ensure we meet the needs of all pupils.
- We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving.
- We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

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

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

- *Early Years Pupil Premium* and non-EYPP students.
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

Positive Action

If we find any disadvantage we will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality plan/objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

- We prepare our children 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 teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through Personal, Social, Emotional Development and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of our community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote an ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for children to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and promote positive images of people.
- We provide opportunities for children to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity throughout the year and also through specific events such as displays, visitors, whole school events eg. Black History Month, Chinese New Year, Diwali, Community Day etc.

Other ways we address equality issues:

- We maintain records of all training relating to equalities.
- We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed.

- We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well-being of our pupils.
- The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole community we:

- Review relevant feedback from the annual parent survey, parent information evening, parent-key person consultation meeting.
- Secure and analyse responses from the annual staff and parents survey, staff meetings and training events.
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children.
- Analyse issues raised in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on individual Support Plans.
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and committee meetings.

Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the Thomas Coram community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

Governing body

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. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Head teacher and Senior Leadership team

The Head teacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination. The Head teacher also has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos;
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination;
- Deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur;
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect our principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability;
- Maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils;
- Support different groups of children through differentiated planning and teaching;
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all new staff as part of the induction procedure. We will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting at least once a year and a record of attendance will be kept. Governors annually review the Equality Policy objectives and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities work taking account of quantitative evidence (eg. data) and qualitative evidence (eg. surveys).

Visitors

All visitors to Thomas Coram Centre, including parents/carers and service providers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in the parent's handbook, on noticeboards, and on our website to enable them to do this.

Equal Opportunities for staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of Thomas Coram reflects the diversity of our community.
- As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- 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.

Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy (which includes a current Accessibility and Equality plan) is available:

- On the school website;
- Within the specific areas of the School Development Plan;
- In the induction procedure for new staff;
- We ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy, objectives and data through, staff meetings, meetings with parents, carers and other communications;
- We publish the policy on the school's website.

Complaints

Complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be dealt with in line with the school's complaints procedure.

Key contacts:

Headteacher: Perina Holness

Chair of Governors: Lucy Razzall

Thomas Coram Centre and Nursery School Equality Objectives 2021-2025

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish specific and measurable equality objectives.

Our equality objectives focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantages. We will regularly (at least annually) review the progress we are making to meet our equality objectives.

Equality Objective 1: Ensure that high quality teaching secures good achievement for all and that we thereby narrow gaps between cohorts of pupils

This will be achieved by:

- Termly analysis of achievement, looking for individuals in need of support but also cohort trends.
- "Moving forward" action plans written by key persons to identify actions for each key child and ensuring targeted enrichment.

Equality Objective 2: Good language and literacy skills are key drivers in breaking the cycle of poverty and low academic achievement.

This will be achieved by:

- Termly analysis of literacy data to identify children who would benefit from extra support.
- Analysis will also help us identify areas of the curriculum where teaching is strong and areas for further training.

Equality Objective 3: Ensure that pupils are proud of the diversity of their local community and of Thomas Coram Centre.

The children's' self-esteem is raised by:

- Ongoing activities are planned regularly which celebrate our diversity through the curriculum.
- Training for practitioners so that we all understand and work towards this common goal.
- Diversity is reflected in our equipment and provisions ie. home corner, books, lunches etc.
- International day celebrations

Equality Objective 4: To review levels of parental engagement in learning and school life, across all activities to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement.

Parental engagement is supported by:

- Parents enter the building every day to drop and collect their children; providing the ideal opportunities for communication.
- We understand that meaningful parental involvement helps parents to become interested and understand what's going on behind all of their child's activities, empowering them to support their children and the work we do.
- We ensure our approach is respectful and welcoming to all families
- Make sure parents feel listened to.
- We give feedback (meetings) in a wide variety of ways in a timely manner.
- Use a variety of ways to communicate, verbal, printed matter, emails, social media (Parenthub) to start conversations.
- Conduct surveys to gauge parental opinion and encourage parental involvement
- Invite parents to attend workshops with their child - a fantastic way to give mums and dads the tools needed to support learning at home.
- Be aware of any language barriers that may prevent a parent from getting involved.
- Most importantly, we are friendly, approachable and welcoming. We take the time to get to know our parents as well as their children.