



PUPIL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY 2024-2025

Approved by the FGB on	18 th September 2024
Date of next review:	Autumn 2025
Responsible Officer	P J Burns

Aims

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Comberton Village College ('the School'). Our school is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Each of the core principles of the Cam Academy Trust suggests an approach which promotes equality and celebrates diversity. Pupils will only achieve **excellence** if the barriers that promote unequal outcomes are successfully removed. Education can only be truly **comprehensive** if every pupil has an equal chance to thrive. This can only be achieved by effective **partnership** with key external organizations, and strong links throughout the local **community**. It is only with a genuinely **international** outlook that pupils will truly understand and value global diversity. These values are commonly held across our Trust and by Comberton Village College.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Cam Academy Trust Staff Equality and Diversity Policy and the following College Policies published on our website at <https://www.combertonvc.org/parent-and-student-information/policies>:

Assessment Policy
Admissions Policy
Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
Curriculum Policy
CVC Student Code of Conduct
Disability Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan
Homework Policy
Positive Behaviour Policy
Quality Assurance Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
SEND Policy
Teaching and Learning Policy

Meeting our Duties

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).

The Equality Act establishes 9 protected characteristics:

- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

- Marriage and civil partnership
- Age

Age and marriage and civil partnership are ‘protected characteristics’ which apply in law only to employment, not pupils in education. However, all schools have a duty to ensure that pupils understand what the law says in each of these cases, the consequences for our society, and their responsibilities. All of these protected characteristics are referred to and/or explicitly taught about in our lessons, including in PSHE, Biology, RPE, and through various assemblies led by our Equality and Diversity group.

Equality and diversity objectives

The aims of this Policy and the School’s ethos as a whole are to:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics
- To advance equality of opportunity for all members of the school community
- To foster good relations between pupils who share a relevant protected characteristic and pupils who do not share it

As a public organization, Comberton Village College has its own formal equalities objectives. These are:

- to narrow the gap between the progress made by disadvantaged boys and those of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally
- to narrow the gap between the attendance of disadvantaged boys and that of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally
- to narrow the gap between the proportion of disadvantaged boys who receive fixed-term exclusions and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

These were adopted in October 2020 and will be reviewed in October 2024.

All members of the School community are expected to comply with this policy.

A number of aspects of our college life are designed to ensure that the above objectives are met; these are as detailed below:

1. Our curriculum

The School affords all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). The School will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Our curriculum has been developed so that across all subjects we ensure that:

- all pupils understand the law and its implications with regard to equality
- the fostering of positive relationships is encouraged
- pupils are prepared for life in a diverse society
- pupils explore and understand the issues related to identity and equality
- there is collaboration with partners and community groups to access support and provide information
- we facilitate support for groups of pupils with protected characteristics (i.e. LGBTQ+)
- we celebrate and value the diverse characteristics of pupils within the school community
- we extend and enhance the experience of pupils in regard to diversity both within our society and the wider global community
- we counter inequalities in outcomes, for example by clearly justifying any elements of single-gender teaching outside PE and RSE, with evidence of improved outcomes over time.

These goals are achieved by the school through its PSHE lessons, assemblies led by our Equality and Diversity Group, our restorative justice practice, positive interactions between pupils and staff involving one to one meetings with the Head of E&D, posters displayed in classrooms and corridors and our commitment to the Rights Respecting Schools for which we have achieved Gold Award status. The school has links to charities and our Equality and Diversity group organises programmes and a link with the Kite Trust and we have achieved the Rainbow Flag award.

2. Removing the barriers to learning

Comberton Village College aims to:

(i) Have a fair and equal admission process

The School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with its Admissions Policy (see [here](#)) and the School's and County's admissions process. The School accepts applications from, and admits, all prospective pupils irrespective of their gender, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief) or special educational needs ('SEN').

Parents must inform the School when submitting the Registration documentation of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's performance /or ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School. Comberton Village College does not discriminate on the grounds of SEN/additional needs and supports the admissions Code agreed in partnership with the LA.

Students with a Statement of SEN or EHC Plan that names our school will be admitted where it is seen that we are able to provide an efficient and effective education which will enable the student to progress and not hinder the progress of other students. (Please see our SEN Policy [here](#) and our Offer of SEN and Disability Provision [here](#))

– [See also our Admissions, Curriculum, Assessment and Quality Assurance policies](#)

(ii) Remove physical barriers pupils may face accessing and moving around the school site.

The School has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils. Students with any form of a disability are welcomed in all classrooms and supported in line with their needs. All students are encouraged to participate in all lessons and provisions are made to all for their full participation when necessary.

Where the School is required to consider its reasonable adjustments duty, it will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, the School is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage. The School will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the School.

The School has an Accessibility Plan in place which can be found on the School's website and a hard copy can be made available upon request. This sets out the School's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

(iii) **Allow access to the curriculum for all** - Access for all is supported through our use of Green Room, Hub and Centre and Cabin TAs to encourage all pupils, regardless of need, to participate in and engage in all lessons, and by allowing TAs to work closely with teachers to ensure this happens. See our Curriculum Policy and SEND Policy.

(iv) **Accommodate the cultural, moral, and spiritual needs of all pupils**, for example in ensuring they can observe religious festivals without damaging their education. This is done, for example, through organising work to be sent home or completed before or after the religious festival. RPE, PSHE, and Equality and Diversity also work to ensure understanding and awareness of various cultural and religious activities and practices

(v) **Provide for pupils who are pregnant or have a child through a supportive, flexible arrangement with the pupil which best fit their situation.** For example, the school's Green Room could allow for more flexible school hours, and the possibility of a 'Year 14' for sixth form pupils could be arranged.

(vi) **Promote equality through the school uniform policy** which is gender neutral, including with regards to PE. All pupils are required to wear a uniform up to and including Year 11. The Principal will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the School's policy on health and safety and it is reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

(vii) **Make reasonable adjustments for pupils with particular needs** through the use of the Centre, the Cabin and KS3 and KS4 Support, as well as adjustments in lessons and throughout the site.

3. Countering and challenging discriminatory behaviour, harassment, and bullying

The School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all its forms is unacceptable and is dealt with in accordance with the School's Positive Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy see [here](#). The Anti-Bullying Policy defines bullying as the persistent and deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone through, *inter alia*, emotional, physical, sexual, verbal, and cyberbullying means, as well as bullying based on sexual orientation or prejudice. The policy clearly identifies the ways in which bullying will be dealt with by the school, including the Head of Year, the Assistant Principal or Principal when appropriate.

Bullying specifically related to Equality and Diversity issues is also logged in an Equality and Diversity Bullying Log and reported yearly to the local authority. All E&D-related incidents are followed up by the Head of Equality and Diversity as well as Heads of Year, Assistant Heads of Year, and the Senior Leadership Team if appropriate. Where appropriate, restorative justice or intervention by pupils in the E&D Group will be arranged.

Staff are trained to 'call out' any attitudes and language that they deem to be inappropriate and submit a Child-on-Child abuse log of concern on MyConcern – the school's electronic safeguarding system. Any such reports are triaged by the Safeguarding team and a multi-agency approach adopted where indicated.

The Equality and Diversity Group functions as one way in which students can report E&D-related bullying incidents. Teachers, Heads of Year, and Assistant Heads of Year are also aware of the reporting procedure, so that E&D-related incidents are flagged to the Head of E&D.

Religious belief

Comberton Village College the School is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or with no religion or faith) subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of the School community. The teaching of Religion, Philosophy, and Ethics (RPE) at KS3 is inclusive and centres on the beliefs and practices of a diverse range of religious groups. The RPE days at KS4 similarly do not focus on one religion but focus on giving students access to information about a wide range of beliefs and practices relating to religion.

The governing body, through the senior leadership team, actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification

The School values the diversity of its students and aims to ensure they are welcomed and are treated fairly and with dignity and respect whatever their sexual orientation. The Equality and Diversity group is a forum through which students are represented and heard, and assemblies, form-time activities, and whole-school displays help to celebrate LGBTQ+ culture and raise awareness. The anti-bullying policy applies to all issues related to LGBTQ+ - related bullying and these issues are recorded and followed up by Head of Year and the Head of Equality and Diversity. PSHE lessons address LGBTQ+ issues and ensure that teaching related to sex education includes information relating to all sexual orientations.

Reporting log through MyConcern to be included? - Safeguarding

4. Monitoring and review

The school tracks pupil progress to ensure that all genders, pupils with SEND, and other important groups within the school are all making the progress they should. The process by which progress is monitored and reviewed by HoYs, HoDs and SLG is set out in the school's Assessment Policy, Quality Assurance Policy and Homework Policy. Interventions are made at department level to support pupils who struggle to make the expected progress, and these are tracked within the respective year teams.

Vulnerable pupils with protected characteristics will also be supported in various ways, including through the Equality & Diversity Group which meets weekly. The Head of Equality and Diversity will work with individual pupils when necessary, and will make referrals to organisations such as the Kite Trust where appropriate.

Staff training on Equality & Diversity related issues is available and is provided annually for NQTs as well as trainee teachers. Additional training, where necessary, will be provided during the September, January, or April staff training days. The Principal will regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy and will report to the governors annually on the policy's effectiveness in practice.

Breach of this policy

Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the School's Positive Behaviour Policy, Child on Child Abuse Policy.

Reviewed September 2024.