



Implementation Date	September 2026
Review Date	September 2029
Reviewer	Liam Donovan

Equal Opportunities and Equality Policy

1. Purpose

Longwood School and Nursery is committed to providing an inclusive environment where every child, family, employee and visitor is treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

We believe that every child should have equal access to education, care, activities, opportunities and support, regardless of their individual circumstances or background.

We will actively promote equality of opportunity and will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

This policy applies to the whole school and nursery community, including children, staff, governors/proprietors, parents, carers, volunteers and visitors.

2. Legal framework

This policy is based primarily on the **Equality Act 2010** and relevant education and early years guidance.

The Equality Act protects people from discrimination because of nine protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race, including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin

- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act applies differently in some circumstances. For example, the school provisions protecting pupils specifically cover **disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation**. Age and marriage/civil partnership remain protected characteristics in other areas, including employment and the provision of services.

Longwood will comply with all relevant legal duties.

3. Our commitment

Longwood School and Nursery will:

- treat every child as an individual;
- provide equal access to learning, care, activities and opportunities;
- recognise and celebrate diversity;
- respect different cultures, religions, beliefs, family backgrounds and identities;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and adults where required;
- challenge discriminatory language, behaviour, stereotypes and attitudes;
- prevent and respond appropriately to discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation;
- ensure that recruitment, employment, training and development opportunities are fair and inclusive;
- work positively with parents and carers;
- consider equality when developing policies, procedures and activities;
- monitor our practice and make improvements where necessary.

The Equality Act requires schools to avoid unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and, where applicable, to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

4. Equality of opportunity

Equality does not always mean treating everyone in exactly the same way.

Some children or adults may require additional support, reasonable adjustments or different approaches to ensure they can participate fully.

Longwood will consider individual needs and remove or reduce barriers wherever reasonably possible.

For example, we may:

- adapt activities or learning materials;
- provide additional support;
- make reasonable adjustments to the environment;
- adapt communication methods;
- provide additional time or assistance;
- work with parents, carers and relevant professionals to identify appropriate support.

Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils are a legal duty and are intended to prevent disabled pupils being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

5. Positive action

Where there is evidence that a particular group experiences disadvantage, has different needs, or is under-represented in an activity, Longwood may take proportionate positive action to improve equality of opportunity.

Positive action is different from unlawful discrimination. It must be based on a genuine identified need and must be proportionate to the aim being addressed.

6. Children and the curriculum

Longwood will provide an inclusive curriculum and learning environment that reflects and respects the children and families within our community.

We will seek opportunities to:

- introduce children to a wide range of cultures, traditions and communities;
- challenge stereotypes and prejudice;
- promote respect and understanding;
- provide resources that reflect diversity;
- ensure activities are accessible and inclusive;

- recognise different family structures and backgrounds;
- encourage children to develop positive relationships with others.

Our early years provision will promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported. This reflects the principles of the EYFS.

7. Race, culture and religion

Longwood welcomes children and families from all racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

We will:

- respect different cultural backgrounds;
- provide opportunities to learn about different cultures and traditions;
- respect religious and non-religious beliefs;
- avoid stereotypes and assumptions;
- respond appropriately to racist or discriminatory behaviour;
- work with families to understand and respect individual needs wherever reasonably possible.

No child or adult should be treated less favourably because of their race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief.

8. Disability and additional needs

Longwood is committed to inclusion for disabled children, staff and visitors.

We will identify and, where reasonably possible, remove barriers to participation.

We will make reasonable adjustments where required and work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to understand individual needs.

Children with additional needs will be supported according to their individual circumstances and in accordance with relevant SEND and safeguarding procedures.

9. Sex, gender reassignment and sexual orientation

Longwood will treat children, families and staff fairly and respectfully and will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or victimisation relating to sex, gender reassignment or sexual orientation.

Any matters involving children will be handled sensitively, in accordance with the child's welfare, safeguarding requirements, the law and current statutory guidance.

10. Pregnancy and maternity

Longwood will not discriminate against a person because of pregnancy or maternity.

We will make appropriate arrangements to support pregnant employees and employees returning from maternity leave in accordance with employment law and our relevant employment policies.

Where pregnancy or maternity affects a child or family using our services, we will respond sensitively and appropriately.

11. Staff recruitment and employment

Longwood is committed to fair and inclusive employment practices.

Equality of opportunity will apply to:

- recruitment and selection;
- induction;
- training and professional development;
- promotion and progression;
- appraisal;
- terms and conditions;
- disciplinary procedures;
- grievance procedures;
- termination of employment.

Employment decisions will be based on relevant skills, qualifications, experience, performance and organisational needs.

Discriminatory behaviour by an employee may result in action under the school's disciplinary procedures and Staff Code of Conduct.

12. Discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Longwood will not tolerate:

Direct discrimination – treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination – applying a rule, practice or requirement to everyone which puts people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage, unless it can be objectively justified where the law allows.

Harassment – unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which violates someone's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Victimisation – treating someone unfairly because they have made, or supported, a complaint or raised a concern about discrimination.

Any concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

13. Bullying and discriminatory behaviour

Bullying, racist behaviour, discriminatory language, harassment or victimisation will not be accepted at Longwood.

Where a concern is raised, the school will:

1. listen to the concern;
2. establish the relevant facts;
3. take appropriate action;
4. support those affected;
5. record the matter where appropriate;
6. consider whether any further action or monitoring is required.

The school's safeguarding, behaviour, complaints and disciplinary procedures will be used where appropriate.

14. Responsibilities

Headteacher and Nursery Manager

The Headteacher and Nursery Manager are responsible for ensuring that:

- this policy is implemented;
- staff understand their responsibilities;
- discriminatory incidents are dealt with appropriately;
- reasonable adjustments are considered;
- equality is considered when making decisions;
- staff receive appropriate information and training;
- the policy is reviewed regularly.

All staff

All staff are responsible for:

- treating others fairly and respectfully;
- challenging inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour;
- supporting inclusive practice;
- following this policy and the Staff Code of Conduct;
- reporting concerns promptly.

Parents and carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- support Longwood's commitment to equality;
- treat staff, children and other families respectfully;
- raise concerns appropriately;
- avoid discriminatory or abusive behaviour.

Children

Children will be encouraged, in an age-appropriate way, to:

- respect others;
- value differences;
- include others;
- use respectful language;
- seek help when they experience or witness unfair or discriminatory behaviour.

15. Reporting concerns

Any child, parent, carer, employee or visitor who experiences or witnesses discrimination, harassment or victimisation should report it to:

Headteacher – Liam Donovan

Nursery Manager – Alison Lapihuska

Concerns involving safeguarding will be dealt with in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Concerns relating to staff will be dealt with through the appropriate employment procedures where necessary.

16. Monitoring and review

Longwood will monitor equality and inclusion through appropriate information and feedback, including where relevant:

- admissions and access;
- participation in activities;
- attendance;
- behaviour and bullying incidents;
- exclusions or disciplinary action;
- complaints;
- staff recruitment and development;
- reasonable adjustments;
- feedback from children, parents and staff.

The policy will be **formally reviewed at least annually**.

It will also be reviewed sooner if:

- there is a significant change in legislation or statutory guidance;
- there is a significant change to the school's provision;
- an equality-related incident identifies a need for change;
- monitoring identifies an area requiring improvement.

The policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
 - Behaviour Policy;
 - SEND Policy;
 - Complaints Policy;
 - Staff Code of Conduct;
 - Recruitment and Selection procedures;
 - Accessibility Plan.
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17. Policy statement

Longwood School and Nursery believes that every child and adult has the right to be treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

We are committed to creating an environment where differences are valued, barriers are addressed and everyone has the opportunity to participate, learn, develop and contribute.

We will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.