

Abingdon Primary School



This school is an academy within The Legacy Learning Trust.



Inclusion Strategy

Status & review	Term	Year
Last review date/Policy adopted	Autumn	2026
Next review	Autumn	2029
Lead	Mr A Cooper	

Belonging First: Inclusion as Our Operating Model

Our vision is to create an inclusive community that supports the well-being of every child and their family to enhance enjoyment, raise achievement and aspiration for all and ensure that children and families are supported through their learning journey and school life in pursuit of excellence.

At our school, inclusion is not a strategy that sits alongside school improvement. It is our school improvement strategy.

Everything begins with belonging. We believe that children learn best when they feel safe, valued, understood and connected to the community around them. Before children can achieve academically, they must first experience the confidence that comes from knowing they belong.

This belief shapes every decision we make.

Our school community is exceptionally diverse and brings enormous strengths. More than fifty languages are spoken across our school. We serve families from every major world religion and from countries across the globe. Around twenty per cent of our pupils have identified SEND, including some with Education, Health and Care Plans, approximately forty-five per cent are eligible for Pupil Premium, pupil mobility is significant and our community sits within the bottom one per cent nationally on the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index.

These statistics do not define our children. They define our responsibility.

Rather than seeing these factors as challenges to overcome, we recognise them as the reality of our community and the reason inclusion must sit at the centre of everything we do. Every policy, every curriculum decision, every staffing decision and every conversation begins with the same question:

Who might this work less well for, and what will we do about it?

This reflects the ambition of the Department for Education's Inclusive Mainstream Fund, which places inclusive leadership, high-quality teaching, early intervention, family partnership and belonging at the heart of mainstream education.

Our Operating Model: Team Around the Child before Teaching and Learning

Our most important strategic decision has been to place our Team Around the Child ahead of our Teaching and Learning Team within our leadership model.

This is intentional.



We believe exceptional teaching has the greatest impact when children's wider needs are understood and barriers are removed first. The Education Endowment Foundation identifies high-quality teaching as the foundation of successful inclusion, but equally emphasises that teachers need systems that enable them to understand and respond to barriers to learning. The DfE similarly describes inclusion as a golden thread running through leadership, professional learning and whole-school systems rather than a separate initiative.

Our leadership therefore works in this order:

1. Children and Families
2. Team Around the Child
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Curriculum
5. Achievement and Excellence

This structure ensures inclusion is everyone's responsibility.

Safeguarding, attendance, SEND, pastoral care, family support and wellbeing are not support functions operating around the edges of school life. They are the foundation upon which excellent teaching is built.

Strategic Priority One: Knowing Every Child

Every child arrives with strengths, aspirations and experiences that deserve to be recognised.

Knowing our children deeply allows us to remove barriers before they become entrenched.

Early identification is not simply about recognising SEND. It is about understanding attendance patterns, family circumstances, language acquisition, emotional wellbeing, previous educational experiences and individual aspirations so that support can be timely and purposeful.

Information is shared deliberately between teachers, teaching assistants, pastoral teams, attendance staff, safeguarding leaders and the SENCO so that children experience joined-up support rather than fragmented interventions. This reflects the DfE expectation that evidence-informed early intervention should be built upon strong communication systems and collaborative professional practice.

Our International New Arrivals Hub

One of the strongest examples of this philosophy is our International New Arrivals Hub.



Children arriving in the United Kingdom with little or no English begin with an intensive six-week morning programme that develops survival English, confidence and familiarity with school routines before accessing the wider curriculum each afternoon.

The purpose extends beyond language acquisition.

The Hub helps children develop confidence, independence and a sense of belonging from their very first days in school. Families are supported alongside children, ensuring transition into our community is both educationally and emotionally successful.

Rather than expecting children to fit into existing systems immediately, we adapt our systems around children.

That is inclusion.

Strategic Priority Two: Children's Voice – Listening, Leading and Belonging

At our school, children are not passive recipients of inclusion; they are active partners in shaping it. We believe belonging becomes authentic when children know their voices matter, their ideas lead to change and they can see the difference they make within our community.

The Department for Education's Inclusive Mainstream Fund places significant emphasis on listening to pupils' experiences to identify barriers and strengthen participation, belonging and accessibility across school life.

We see this not as an occasional consultation exercise, but as a fundamental part of how we lead our school.

Children help us design the experiences they want to have. Our Personal Development offer is built from their interests, aspirations and feedback. The clubs we provide are not chosen for children—they are chosen with children. They have told us what activities excite them, what opportunities they would value and, equally importantly, what barriers prevent them from participating. Their feedback has directly influenced how and when clubs are delivered, leading to opportunities during the school day, before school through Breakfast Club and in ways that ensure children attending mosque or facing other barriers can still take part. When children help shape provision, participation becomes more equitable because it reflects the realities of their lives.

Leadership opportunities are equally central to our culture of belonging. We believe every child should have opportunities to develop confidence, responsibility and a sense of contribution throughout their time at school. Our leadership roles are meaningful, visible and influential, allowing children to shape the community they belong to.



Children can apply to become Prefects through a formal application and interview process, giving them authentic experience of aspiration, responsibility and leadership. Alongside this, our Headstarters, ECO Warriors, Junior Road Safety Officers, School Council representatives and Sanctuary Buddies each make distinctive contributions to school life. As a recognised School of Sanctuary, our Sanctuary Buddies play a particularly important role in welcoming new arrivals, helping children feel safe, connected and valued from their earliest days in our community.

These young leaders do far more than hold titles. They present in assemblies, lead campaigns, support younger children, contribute to school improvement and help shape decisions that affect everyday school life. Through these opportunities, children learn that leadership is about service, responsibility and creating positive change for others.

Running alongside these experiences is our Abingdon Armour for Life, a personal passport that remains with every child throughout their journey at our school. More than a record of participation, it celebrates the development of the life skills, character strengths and personal achievements that prepare children for life beyond primary school. As children progress through the passport, they build confidence, resilience, independence, teamwork and leadership, recognising that success is measured not only by academic outcomes but also by the values and experiences that help them flourish as members of their community. Listening to children, creating opportunities for them to lead and celebrating their growth through Abingdon Armour for Life all reinforce the same message: every child has something valuable to contribute.

Children do not simply belong to our school.

They help build it.

Strategic Priority Three: High-Quality Teaching for Every Child

Once children feel secure within our community, high-quality teaching becomes the vehicle through which every child can flourish.

The Education Endowment Foundation identifies high-quality adaptive teaching as the single most important approach for improving outcomes for pupils with SEND because it strengthens the universal offer for all learners rather than creating separate experiences. The DfE similarly describes adaptive teaching as the foundation of an inclusive mainstream school.

At our school, adaptive teaching does not mean lowering expectations.

It means maintaining ambitious expectations while removing unnecessary barriers to success.



Teachers develop expertise in recognising barriers before selecting appropriate adaptations. Professional learning focuses on understanding why particular approaches work, when they should be used and how they become embedded through deliberate practice, coaching and ongoing feedback rather than isolated training sessions.

Our classrooms are characterised by:

- ambitious learning for every child;
- explicit instruction;
- carefully designed scaffolding;
- responsive questioning;
- purposeful use of adults;
- consistent routines that reduce cognitive load;
- adaptations that increase participation rather than dependence.

The question is never whether children can access ambitious learning. The question is what adults need to change so they can.

Strategic Priority Four: A Curriculum That Reflects Our Community

Our curriculum belongs to our children.

The National Curriculum provides the framework, but we deliberately shape it so that it reflects our community while opening children's horizons beyond their own experiences.

Representation is carefully planned. Every classroom displays a world map identifying the countries our children and families come from. These maps are daily reminders that every child's story belongs within our school.

Our literature curriculum is equally intentional. Every text is selected because it provides either:

- a mirror, allowing children to see themselves reflected positively within learning, or
- a window, allowing children to understand experiences different from their own.

Authors, illustrators, historical contexts and cultural perspectives are considered carefully so that representation becomes an everyday feature of learning rather than an occasional celebration.

Every world religion is represented respectfully across our curriculum, ensuring children learn both about their own identities and about the diversity of the wider world.

This approach strengthens belonging while maintaining academic ambition.

Children should never have to choose between seeing themselves represented and accessing an excellent education.



Strategic Priority Five: Belonging Beyond the Classroom

School life extends far beyond lessons. The DfE emphasises that inclusion should include clubs, educational visits and wider participation because belonging is strengthened when children access the full life of their school.

Our Personal Development offer has therefore been designed through an inclusion lens.

Rather than asking children to fit around our timetable, we adapt opportunities around children's lives.

Some clubs operate during the school day so that children who, for example, attend mosque after school can participate fully. Others are delivered through Breakfast Club, particularly supporting children eligible for Pupil Premium who may otherwise face barriers to participation.

Our enrichment offer reflects the interests and identities of our community.

Children can participate in activities including Afro Beats, gardening, rollerskating, judo and cycling alongside many other opportunities that ensure there is genuinely something for everyone.

Participation matters because belonging matters.

Children discover talents, friendships and confidence through experiences that extend beyond the classroom.

Educational Visits for All

We are equally determined that financial circumstances should never prevent children from experiencing the wider world. Funding is actively sought so that educational visits and residential experiences remain accessible wherever possible. Our annual Year Four farm experience demonstrates this commitment particularly clearly.

Many of our vulnerable pupils may never otherwise experience a working farm. By removing financial barriers, we create opportunities that broaden children's experiences, strengthen aspirations and build lasting memories alongside their peers.

Inclusion means every child boards the coach believing they belong there.

Strategic Priority Six: The Little ARCH – Bespoke Provision Within an Inclusive Community

Some children require highly personalised provision. Our response is the Little ARCH.

The Little ARCH provides bespoke learning environments for children with significant SEND whose needs require higher adult-to-child ratios and carefully adapted learning experiences.

However, the defining feature of Little ARCH is not separation. It is connection. Children remain members of our wider school community, with inclusion opportunities planned thoughtfully so they continue learning alongside peers whenever appropriate.

The environment adapts around children's needs without reducing ambition.

This reflects the DfE's emphasis that accessibility involves both thoughtful environments and skilled adults who understand how to reduce barriers through everyday practice.

Strategic Priority Seven: Families as Partners

Inclusion cannot exist without trust. Families know their children best. Our responsibility is to work alongside them respectfully, consistently and collaboratively so that decisions remain centred on children's strengths, needs and aspirations.

Our work extends beyond traditional parental engagement. It strengthens community. One example of this is our Muslim women's wellbeing and fitness sessions, delivered through our Parent Support Advisor.

These sessions remove barriers that may otherwise prevent women accessing exercise while strengthening relationships between families and school.

When families feel they belong, children benefit too.

Our communication is therefore strengths-based, culturally responsive and focused on building confidence rather than creating dependency.

Strategic Priority Eight: Building Staff Expertise

The greatest resource within our school is our people.

The Inclusive Mainstream Fund emphasises that lasting improvement depends upon sustained professional learning rather than one-off training. Investment becomes meaningful when practice changes consistently across classrooms over time.

Professional development therefore focuses on implementation.

Staff develop expertise through:

- shared professional language
- coaching, both internally and from external professionals
- modelling



- deliberate practice
- collaborative reflection
- ongoing feedback
- access to supervision

This learning extends beyond teachers.

Teaching assistants, office staff, lunchtime supervisors, pastoral teams and leaders all contribute to creating an inclusive culture because every adult shapes children's experiences of belonging.

Consistency matters.

Children should experience the same inclusive culture whether they are entering Reception, attending Breakfast Club, visiting the Little ARCH, participating in Afro Beats or learning mathematics.

Working Beyond Our School

Our commitment to inclusion extends beyond our own community. We contribute to Local Authority work, share effective practice with other schools and engage in national conversations about inclusive education because we believe schools become stronger when they learn together.

Our community has taught us that inclusion is both practical and transformational.

By sharing what works, we hope more children experience the same sense of belonging that drives our own work.

Measuring What Matters

We will evaluate this strategy through evidence that reflects children's lived experiences rather than relying on attainment alone.

We will consider:

- pupil voice and belonging
- attendance and engagement
- participation in clubs, trips and wider opportunities
- classroom implementation of inclusive practice
- SEND outcomes
- family voice
- staff confidence and professional learning
- implementation evidence gathered through coaching and leadership review

This reflects both the EEF's implementation guidance and the DfE's expectation that leaders use multiple sources of evidence to understand whether inclusive practice is becoming embedded across the school.

Our Inclusion Pledge

Everything returns to one belief.

Every child deserves to belong.

Every family deserves to feel welcomed.

Every member of staff has the responsibility and privilege of removing barriers that prevent children from participating fully in school life.

We will continue asking difficult questions about equity.

We will continue adapting our systems around children rather than expecting children to adapt around our systems.

We will continue designing a curriculum that reflects our community while opening doors to the wider world.

We will continue ensuring opportunities remain accessible regardless of language, faith, disability or financial circumstance.

Above all, we will continue placing the Team Around the Child before everything else, because when children know they belong, they attend; when they attend, they participate; when they participate, they achieve; and when they achieve, they flourish.

Inclusion is not something we do. It is who we are.