

## Guiding Principles

Manchester is a diverse and growing city where frequently education settings creatively provide place-based responses to challenges which are tailored to the communities they serve. However, as a city, it is also important to have some shared core values which underpin and guide the way we work. We believe shared values are powerful motivators to find collective solutions.

As part of the development of this toolkit, senior school leaders, teaching staff and key partner agencies were surveyed to gain an understanding of what beliefs and aims are shared about inclusion across Manchester. These shared values have been taken to form a firm foundation of guiding principles upon which to build a toolkit of resources and ideas for support.

They recognise Manchester as an inclusive, collaborative learning community which seeks to promote the best outcomes for all children and young people.

### Principles which informed the writing of this toolkit.

#### We believe:

- Relationships lie at the heart of inclusive practice. We put relationships first. This requires an ethos across all our education settings that promotes strong relationships between staff, children/young people, their parents/carers, other education settings and partner agencies.
- It is important to take a non-judgemental, curious and empathetic attitude towards behaviour and learning. Children and young people presenting with additional needs should be regarded as vulnerable not troublesome and we all have a duty to explore their needs and provide appropriate support.
- Finding solutions is often a complex process. Therefore, it is important we are always open to learning from others and willing to share knowledge and best practice
- Being 'fair' is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity).
- Exclusion should be the absolute last resort.

**We will strive to:**

- Maintain high expectations around behaviour. Children and young people need predictable routines, expectations and responses in education settings but with sufficient flexibility to allow an empathetic and personalised approach.
- Ensure parent and children/young people's opinions and wishes are sought and fully listened to. It is important children, young people and their parents participate in decisions taken about them.
- Ensure all teaching and non-teaching staff are equipped with the skills needed to adapt the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of children and young people.
- Ensure we are reflective and responsive. For example, if suspensions are becoming frequent we will reflect if this approach is effective for this particular CYP and whether a different response might provide a more effective response.
- Ensure all children and young people have daily access to qualified, curriculum-linked teachers.
- Ensure we are confident that, before a decision to exclude permanently is made, all reasonable options have been exhausted and that this action will lead to reflection and improved practice in the future.

In writing these guiding principles, it is recognised that schools and other education settings can face significant challenges managing to include pupils with complex needs. It also acknowledges the responsibility held by headteachers for looking after the well-being of all members of the school/setting community. It is hoped that taking a city-wide approach and working together in a consistent and supportive manner, these challenges can be openly discussed and collaboratively solved. Leading to a Manchester where every child and young person;

***“has a sense of belonging, feel respected and is valued for who they are.”***