

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES PROGRESS REPORT – OCTOBER 2025

To: Local Governing Body
From: Natalie Hancock
Date: October 2025
Review date: October 2026
cc. River Learning Trust Central Team



Introduction:

We have identified the following 5 objectives as priorities for CNS as we are passionate about all our students and staff feeling a strong sense of belonging to our school and achieving strong outcomes regardless of background, heritage or religion. Overcoming barriers through high quality teaching, with an ethos that reinforces aspiration and attainment for all is what we strive to achieve. We realise the importance of getting the basics right, like attendance and behaviour, because we know that disadvantage has a big influence on pupils' life chances. We know that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are twice as likely to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) and at higher risk of ending up in poverty as adults. With a relentless focus on our objectives, we hope to avoid that for our students, and instead celebrate students who are able to make choices and enjoy successful, fulfilling and happy lives.

The following report draws on the most recent data within the School Self-Evaluation (SEF) and recent reports to the Local Governing Body.

(1) To raise standards, narrow the achievement gap and strive to advance equality of opportunity for those who are socio-economically disadvantaged and those with protected characteristics.

We have seen a significant rise in the progress and attainment of disadvantaged learners since 2018.

GCSE Results	2018	2019	2022	2023	2024	2025
Attainment 8 DA	26.9	36.1	45.71	39.4	38	35 (41)
Progress 8 DA	-0.98	-0.58	-0.15	+0.21	-0.39 (-0.09)	N/A

Due to Covid 19 there is no Progress 8 measure for this cohort or the next (lack of KS2 SATS)

The Attainment 8 DA figure for 2025 is 35. However, we had 4 students who did not attend school due to their highly complex needs, and the figure of 41 is not including these students. Our disadvantaged /vulnerable students are benefiting most from recent improvements in teaching and learning, through adaptations and high-TEMPO teaching and strong classroom behaviour across all areas of the school. The most recent adaptations to high-TEMPO have included step by step instructions and reading for enrichment, both of which disproportionately impact our most vulnerable students in class. We will continue to refine and embed adaptations in all lessons and across all subjects. Oracy is also a key factor in developing confidence and will continue to be a focus.

Conclusion: Strong progress.

(2) To improve the attendance of disadvantaged students.

Although our overall attendance at CNS has remained largely in line with the national average, our attendance for disadvantaged students remains a concern. The academic year 24-25 has proven challenging due to the unique nature and unusually high proportion of severely absent students with complex needs. A significant number of these students are disadvantaged.

Attendance amongst disadvantaged students:

		2024/25						
2021-22	2022-23	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6	
84.82%	85.55%	82.60%	81.10%	80.70%	79.60%	79.67%	79.10%	

Persistent absence amongst disadvantaged students:

2021-22	2022-23	2023/24	2024/25
48.57%	48%	30.8%	49.7%

Our senior pastoral leaders and attendance team continue to implement a daily fast-action response to student absence, with a clear focus on students eligible for the pupil premium grant, those with SEND need, and our most vulnerable learners. Morning absence calls are made promptly to parents and carers to identify reasons for absence and to offer early support. We take a 'support first' approach, ensuring every contact is used to build and strengthen relationships with families and students. Our senior pastoral leaders conduct home visits and often work closely alongside the SENDCo to identify and address barriers to attendance, particularly for our hardest-to-reach families.

Where additional support is needed, we work in partnership with external agencies such as MASH, LCSS, Family Help, and the Oxfordshire County Council Attendance and Engagement Team, ensuring both support and challenge are provided and that legal processes are followed where appropriate.

We hold support plan meetings for targeted students, use student voice to understand lived experiences, and analyse attendance data forensically to identify patterns and inform timely interventions.

The pastoral team continues to focus on disadvantaged students, working collaboratively with families to understand the underlying causes of absence. Looking ahead, we are further adapting our curriculum in partnership with local alternative provision to re-engage and sustain attendance among our most vulnerable learners.

Conclusion: Limited progress but remains a school priority

(3) To improve outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers.

All students including CFC (cared for children) are exposed to high standards of teaching and learning with a focus on our high-TEMPO model. Strong adaptations in lessons, together with high quality profiles and PEPs (personal education plans), results in strong engagement from those students. Daily monitoring of CFC/PCFC attendance takes place and regular contact with the carer is made by our dedicated Vulnerable Learners Coordinator. Weekly mentoring takes place to ensure they are comfortable and content in lessons and social time. Our Vulnerable Learners Coordinator has attended PACE training (trauma informed care) and implemented this in her work with children, supporting them in different ways to avoid suspension. Regular contact with parents and carers occurs to work together to foster a better understanding of the child and current routines and needs. Cared for children are prioritised in terms of activities and trips. The Vulnerable Learners Coordinator is informed of opportunities in order to encourage participation and support parents and carers to facilitate this in terms of times, transport and funding. Termly round robins are carried out to ensure that teacher and student are working well together to support best possible outcomes for the child in all subjects.

The names of CWFC and PCFC (previously cared for children) are shared in the weekly staff bulletin and discussed weekly in our Guidance Team Meetings, to keep the profile of these students high on our agenda. Staff that are not directly working with CFC but have interactions are offered the chance to have access to more information about them. Any member of the staff team could encounter our CFC and we want them to interact with them with knowledge about them.

The Vulnerable Learners Coordinator meets with the social worker and virtual school case holder for each CFC/PCFC to ensure good awareness and understanding of how the child came into care, the impact this has had on them and their current circumstances.

Conclusion: Very strong provision in place.

(4) To reduce the number of exclusions for disadvantaged students.

Suspensions over time compared (all CNS versus disadvantaged only):

	2021-22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
All	103	61	136	75

DA	46	25	57	33
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We have seen a significant reduction in suspensions amongst disadvantaged students from 23/24 to 24/25 and also a reduction in suspensions for students with special educational needs. We will always seek to avoid suspensions due to the importance of vulnerable students needing to engage with their learning in school, develop a sense of belonging and avoid the isolation that comes with a suspension. Alternative sanctions are sought which enables that continued engagement. Our repair and rebuild (R&R) process is often much more impactful than a suspension in terms of students acknowledging, reflecting upon, and then owning their unacceptable behaviours. Linked to our school value of belonging, we recognise that all negative behaviours reflect an unmet need, so there is a desire to understand that need and address it. We expect to further reduce our suspension rate by building upon our character education and making changes to our detention system. We will also continue to engage with local providers, to try and motivate and engage our most vulnerable students.

Ofsted reported in May 2023: “Low-level disruptive behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes is very rare. Pupils’ understanding of the school’s behaviour policy is strong. They appreciate that staff apply the policy consistently and fairly.” We continue to build on this positive reflection.

In the RLT student survey carried out in May 2024, 61.3% of pupils stated that “Behaviour of other pupils in lessons is good” This was 16.4% higher than other comparable schools.

Conclusion: Steady progress.

(5) To ensure that Chipping Norton School is an inclusive workplace, with equality of opportunity for all staff

We continue to strive to make CNS a welcoming inclusive, diverse place in which to work. In the RLT’s annual stakeholder survey 2024, 79.3% of staff said ‘I feel respected and valued at work. This was 4.7% higher than other comparable schools. In addition, 90.8% of staff said ‘I would recommend working in this place of work’. This was 14.9% higher than other comparable schools.

We offer staff an annual invitation to review contracts and hours, being fully supportive of all flexible working arrangements (15 undertaken in the past two years).

We always try to support generous compassionate leave requests, with a non-judgmental approach to supporting staff on long-term sick leave.

We take the mental health of our staff seriously. We currently have six fully trained mental health first aiders, including teachers and associate staff. We have had no bullying / harassment claims in the past four plus years and we have an assertive response when a student embarrasses, humiliates, harasses or attempts to bully staff. Students and staff know that this is not tolerated and always results in a firm response.

Staff turnover remains very low and 90.8% of staff said that ‘This place of work is well led and managed’. This was 6.8% higher than other comparable schools.

Conclusion: Strong progress.

This report will be updated in twelve months' time (October 2026)