

Combat Classroom

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Organisation: Combat Classroom Ltd

Setting: Alternative Provision

Policy owner: Director / Equality Lead

Linked roles: Designated Safeguarding Lead, SEND Lead, Tutors, Coaches, Mentors and Placement Lead

Applies to: Pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers, visitors, placing schools, local authorities and partner agencies

Date adopted: 30.06.2026

Review date: 30.06.2027

Review cycle: Annually, or sooner if legislation, guidance, provision arrangements or commissioner requirements change

1. Policy Statement

Combat Classroom is committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive Alternative Provision environment where every pupil is treated with dignity and given a fair opportunity to learn, develop and progress.

We recognise that many pupils referred to Alternative Provision may have experienced exclusion, disrupted education, trauma, poverty, discrimination, low confidence, special educational needs, disability, poor attendance, social isolation or negative experiences of school. Combat Classroom aims to remove barriers, not create new ones.

Combat Classroom will promote equality, celebrate diversity and actively challenge discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation and prejudice.

Our approach is based on high expectations, positive relationships, reasonable adjustments, trauma-informed practice, restorative support and clear boundaries.

2. Purpose of this Policy

This policy explains how Combat Classroom will:

- promote equality, diversity and inclusion;
 - prevent discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying;
 - make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities and additional needs;
 - ensure fair access to education, mentoring, physical activity and progression;
 - support pupils from different backgrounds and communities;
 - challenge harmful language, stereotypes and prejudice;
 - ensure staff model inclusive and professional behaviour;
 - link equality duties with safeguarding, SEND, attendance, behaviour and curriculum;
 - monitor equality-related incidents, concerns and outcomes.
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3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all pupils attending Combat Classroom;
- parents, carers and families;
- staff, volunteers, coaches and mentors;
- directors and senior leaders;
- visitors and contractors;
- placing schools;
- local authorities;
- external professionals and partner organisations.

This policy applies across all Combat Classroom activity, including:

- classroom learning;
 - Functional Skills;
 - AQA Unit Award Scheme work;
 - ASDAN or personal development learning;
 - mentoring;
 - MMA, boxing, grappling, fitness and practical sport sessions;
 - arrival and dismissal;
 - break and lunch periods;
 - changing areas and toilets;
 - online communication;
 - trips, events and off-site activity;
 - marketing, social media and publicity.
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4. Legal and Guidance Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Education Act 1996;
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- Behaviour in Schools guidance;
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying guidance;
- Alternative Provision guidance;
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018;
- Data Use and Access Act 2025;
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026;
- Combat Classroom Safeguarding, SEND, Behaviour, Attendance, Data Protection, Health and Safety, Referral and Complaints policies.

Combat Classroom recognises that placing schools and local authorities may retain statutory responsibilities for pupils attending Alternative Provision. Combat Classroom will work with commissioners to help them meet their duties and to ensure that pupils are treated fairly, safely and inclusively while attending the provision.

5. Protected Characteristics

Combat Classroom will not discriminate against pupils, staff or others because of a protected characteristic.

For pupils, relevant protected characteristics include:

- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

For staff, volunteers, visitors and wider employment matters, protected characteristics also include:

- age;

- marriage and civil partnership.

Combat Classroom will also be mindful of barriers linked to:

- poverty and socio-economic disadvantage;
- care experience;
- being a child in need or child protection;
- being a young carer;
- being adopted or in kinship care;
- being known to youth justice or social care;
- being at risk of exploitation;
- English as an additional language;
- disrupted education;
- mental health and emotional wellbeing;
- trauma and adverse childhood experiences;
- low literacy or numeracy;
- transport barriers;
- digital exclusion.

These additional factors may not all be protected characteristics in law, but they can affect a pupil's ability to access education and support.

6. Key Principles

Combat Classroom's equality, diversity and inclusion approach is based on the following principles:

- every pupil deserves safety, respect and opportunity;
 - inclusion does not mean lowering expectations;
 - reasonable adjustments help pupils meet expectations fairly;
 - behaviour may be linked to unmet need, trauma, communication difficulty or previous negative experiences;
 - discrimination, bullying and harmful language must be challenged;
 - staff must model the standards expected from pupils;
 - pupils should see positive role models and progression routes;
 - physical activity should be adapted so pupils can participate safely;
 - pupils should be supported to understand respect, consent, difference and responsibility;
 - equality concerns should be recorded, reviewed and acted upon.
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7. Roles and Responsibilities

Director / Senior Leader

The Director or senior leader is responsible for:

- ensuring this policy is implemented;
- setting an inclusive culture across Combat Classroom;
- ensuring staff receive appropriate training;
- ensuring equality is considered in referrals, placements, risk assessments and reviews;
- ensuring incidents of discrimination, bullying or harassment are recorded and acted upon;
- ensuring equality issues are considered in curriculum, staffing, recruitment and quality assurance;
- reviewing data and feedback to identify barriers or patterns;
- reporting serious concerns to placing schools, local authorities or safeguarding agencies where required.

Equality Lead

The Equality Lead is responsible for:

- supporting staff to understand equality and inclusion responsibilities;
- monitoring equality-related incidents and concerns;
- reviewing access barriers for pupils;
- supporting reasonable adjustments with the SEND Lead;
- ensuring pupil voice is heard;
- contributing to policy review;
- helping to identify staff training needs.

Where Combat Classroom does not appoint a separate Equality Lead, this responsibility will sit with the Director or another named senior member of staff.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL is responsible for:

- recognising when discrimination, bullying, harassment or abuse creates a safeguarding concern;
- ensuring pupils with protected characteristics or additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded;
- responding to child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, exploitation or discriminatory abuse;
- making referrals or sharing information with placing schools, social care, police or other agencies where required;
- ensuring safeguarding records include relevant equality and vulnerability information.

SEND Lead

The SEND Lead is responsible for:

- ensuring pupils with SEND and disabilities receive appropriate reasonable adjustments;
- reviewing EHCPs, SEND Support plans and pupil passports;
- advising staff on inclusive teaching and coaching strategies;
- ensuring SEND information is considered in behaviour, attendance and risk planning;
- working with placing schools, local authorities and families.

Tutors, Coaches, Mentors and Support Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- treating pupils fairly and respectfully;
- challenging discriminatory language, bullying, harassment and stereotypes;
- applying reasonable adjustments consistently;
- using inclusive teaching and coaching strategies;
- recording and reporting equality-related concerns;
- modelling respectful language and behaviour;
- promoting positive relationships;
- ensuring pupils are safe during classroom, mentoring and physical activity sessions.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- treat others with respect;
- avoid discriminatory, abusive or harmful language;
- follow Combat Classroom's behaviour expectations;
- respect differences in background, identity, ability, belief and experience;
- report bullying, discrimination or harassment;
- take part in restorative work where harm has been caused.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- support Combat Classroom's inclusive values;
- share information about their child's needs, culture, religion, health, SEND, disability or barriers where relevant;
- raise concerns early;
- work with Combat Classroom, placing schools and local authorities to support the pupil.

Placing Schools and Local Authorities

Placing schools and local authorities are expected to:

- provide accurate information at referral stage;
 - share relevant SEND, safeguarding, medical, attendance and risk information;
 - identify known equality or discrimination concerns;
 - support reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
 - attend review meetings where required;
 - work with Combat Classroom to address barriers and ensure the placement remains suitable.
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8. Admissions, Referrals and Access to Provision

Combat Classroom will consider referrals fairly and will not refuse a placement because of a pupil's protected characteristic.

Before accepting a placement, Combat Classroom will consider whether the provision can safely and appropriately meet the pupil's needs.

Referral decisions will consider:

- the pupil's age and stage;
- SEND and disability needs;
- safeguarding information;
- medical information;
- behaviour and risk information;
- physical activity suitability;
- attendance barriers;
- peer group compatibility;
- staffing and supervision requirements;
- reasonable adjustments required;
- whether additional support or funding is needed.

Where Combat Classroom cannot safely meet a pupil's needs, this will be explained clearly to the placing school or local authority. The reason must be based on suitability, safety, staffing, environment, risk or inability to meet need, not on discrimination or assumptions.

Combat Classroom will work with placing schools and local authorities to identify what adjustments, support or additional planning may make a placement possible.

9. Reasonable Adjustments

Combat Classroom will make reasonable adjustments to reduce disadvantage for disabled pupils and pupils with additional needs.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- adapted teaching resources;
- extra processing time;
- visual instructions;
- reduced written workload;
- verbal responses instead of written responses;
- movement breaks;
- quiet space;
- phased start;
- trusted adult check-ins;
- adapted timetable;
- modified physical activity;
- non-contact sport options;
- smaller group work;
- sensory adjustments;
- additional supervision;
- adapted behaviour support;
- use of assistive technology where available;
- modified assessment methods;
- alternative ways to evidence learning.

Reasonable adjustments will be planned through the SEND and Reasonable Adjustments Policy and reviewed regularly.

Reasonable adjustments do not remove expectations around safety, respect and behaviour. They are designed to help pupils access the provision fairly and successfully.

10. Inclusive Curriculum

Combat Classroom will promote equality, diversity and inclusion through its curriculum and wider personal development offer.

This may include learning around:

- respect and responsibility;
- healthy relationships;
- teamwork and communication;
- anti-bullying;
- discrimination and prejudice;

- gender stereotypes;
- positive masculinity;
- emotional regulation;
- consent and boundaries;
- online behaviour;
- cultural awareness;
- disability awareness;
- mental health and wellbeing;
- careers and progression;
- community contribution;
- leadership and role modelling.

Combat Classroom will aim to use resources, examples and discussions that reflect different backgrounds, abilities and experiences.

Staff will avoid reinforcing stereotypes about race, sex, disability, religion, class, masculinity, femininity, family background, education history or ability.

11. Combat Sports, Inclusion and Safety

Combat Classroom uses MMA, boxing, grappling and fitness as tools for engagement, discipline, confidence and personal development.

Combat Classroom will ensure physical activity is inclusive and safe by:

- adapting drills for different abilities and needs;
- avoiding assumptions about pupils based on sex, size, disability, confidence or background;
- ensuring all pupils understand consent in partner work;
- making clear that contact activity is controlled, supervised and never used aggressively;
- offering non-contact alternatives where needed;
- respecting medical and physical limitations;
- supporting pupils who may feel anxious about physical activity;
- considering sensory needs in noisy or busy gym environments;
- ensuring changing and toilet arrangements are safe and respectful;
- challenging sexist, homophobic, racist, ableist or abusive language in sport sessions;
- promoting discipline, humility and respect as core martial arts values.

Combat sport techniques must never be used as punishment, intimidation, restraint or behaviour management.

12. Behaviour, Bullying and Discrimination

Combat Classroom will not tolerate:

- racism;
- sexism;
- homophobia;
- biphobia;
- transphobia;
- ableism;
- religious discrimination;
- sexual harassment;
- harassment linked to gender reassignment;
- pregnancy or maternity discrimination;
- discriminatory jokes or “banter”;
- bullying linked to poverty, family background, appearance, SEND, disability, care experience or education history;
- online abuse;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- victimisation of someone who reports a concern.

All incidents will be taken seriously, recorded and responded to.

Responses may include:

- immediate challenge by staff;
- support for the pupil harmed;
- restorative conversation;
- education around the harm caused;
- parent/carer contact;
- notification to placing school or local authority;
- behaviour support plan review;
- safeguarding referral where required;
- risk assessment review;
- placement review;
- consequences in line with the Behaviour Policy.

Combat Classroom recognises that pupils may repeat language they have heard elsewhere without understanding the impact. Staff will respond in a way that is firm, educational and proportionate.

13. Child-on-Child Abuse and Harmful Behaviour

Discriminatory abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, exploitation, online abuse or harmful behaviour between pupils may be a safeguarding issue.

Staff must report concerns to the DSL immediately where an incident involves:

- sexualised language or behaviour;
- unwanted touching;
- threats or intimidation;
- coercion or control;
- discriminatory abuse;
- online harassment;
- sharing images or videos;
- targeting of a vulnerable pupil;
- repeated bullying;
- violence or threats linked to identity or difference.

Combat Classroom will follow its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and work with the placing school, local authority, parents/carers, social care or police where necessary.

14. Language and Communication

Combat Classroom expects all staff and pupils to use respectful language.

Staff will challenge:

- slurs;
- discriminatory jokes;
- harmful stereotypes;
- sexualised comments;
- comments about bodies or appearance;
- insults linked to intelligence, disability or learning needs;
- comments about family income, clothing or housing;
- comments that shame pupils for educational history or exclusion.

Where pupils use inappropriate language, staff will explain why it is harmful and support pupils to repair harm where appropriate.

Staff should avoid public shaming and should use calm, private correction where possible.

15. Religion, Belief and Culture

Combat Classroom will respect pupils' religion, belief and cultural background.

Reasonable steps will be taken to support:

- dietary requirements;
- religious observance where practical;
- modesty needs in sport and changing arrangements;
- cultural expectations around clothing or physical contact;
- family communication needs;
- religious festivals and significant dates;
- respectful discussion of beliefs.

Combat Classroom will not allow religion, belief or culture to be used to justify abuse, discrimination, bullying, harassment or unsafe practice.

16. Sex, Gender and Healthy Relationships

Combat Classroom will challenge harmful gender stereotypes and promote respectful relationships.

Staff will ensure that:

- pupils are not limited by assumptions about being male or female;
- girls and boys have fair access to learning, leadership and physical activity;
- sexist language is challenged;
- sexual harassment is never dismissed as banter;
- pupils learn about respect, boundaries and consent;
- pupils are supported to understand healthy relationships;
- concerns are reported through safeguarding procedures.

Where pupils are questioning their identity or require individual support, Combat Classroom will respond sensitively, involve appropriate safeguarding leads, and work with parents/carers, placing schools and external professionals in line with current guidance and the pupil's welfare.

17. Disability, SEND and Neurodiversity

Combat Classroom will actively support pupils with disabilities, SEND and neurodivergent profiles.

This includes pupils with:

- autism;
- ADHD;
- dyslexia;
- dyspraxia;
- speech and language needs;
- sensory processing needs;
- physical disabilities;
- medical conditions;
- SEMH needs;
- trauma-related needs;
- learning difficulties.

Staff will avoid treating behaviour linked to unmet need as deliberate defiance without considering context.

Support will be coordinated through the SEND and Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

18. Socio-Economic Disadvantage

Combat Classroom recognises that poverty and disadvantage can affect attendance, confidence, food access, uniform, equipment, digital access, transport and participation.

Staff will respond sensitively where pupils experience hardship.

Combat Classroom may support pupils by:

- liaising with placing schools around free school meals;
- supporting travel planning where agreed;
- avoiding unnecessary costs;
- providing basic equipment where possible;
- signposting to support services;
- offering discreet food or welfare support where needed;
- avoiding stigma around clothing, possessions or family circumstances.

Concerns about neglect, hunger, lack of clothing, unsafe housing or family hardship must be shared with the DSL.

19. Staff Recruitment and Employment

Combat Classroom will promote equality and fairness in recruitment and employment.

Recruitment processes will aim to ensure:

- fair shortlisting;
- safer recruitment checks;
- role-relevant selection criteria;
- reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants;
- no unlawful discrimination;
- clear expectations around safeguarding and professional conduct;
- inclusive induction and training.

Staff are expected to uphold this policy as part of their professional conduct.

Discriminatory conduct by staff may be treated as a disciplinary matter and, where relevant, a safeguarding concern.

20. Staff Training

Staff will receive appropriate training and guidance on equality, diversity and inclusion.

Training may include:

- Equality Act awareness;
- safeguarding and protected characteristics;
- SEND and reasonable adjustments;
- trauma-informed practice;
- anti-bullying;
- child-on-child abuse;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- racism and discriminatory language;
- inclusive communication;
- restorative practice;
- safe physical activity adaptation;
- data protection and confidentiality.

Pupil-specific briefings will be provided where individual needs, risks or adjustments are required.

21. Data, Monitoring and Review

Combat Classroom will monitor equality and inclusion through:

- attendance data;
- behaviour incidents;
- bullying and discrimination records;
- safeguarding concerns;
- exclusions or placement breakdowns;
- pupil voice;
- parent/carer feedback;
- placing school feedback;
- SEND and reasonable adjustment reviews;
- progress and qualification outcomes;
- complaints and concerns.

Where patterns are identified, Combat Classroom will consider whether changes are needed to policy, curriculum, staffing, training, supervision, environment, referral criteria or support planning.

Data will be handled in line with Combat Classroom's Data Protection Policy.

22. Equality Objectives

Combat Classroom will set and review equality objectives to support continuous improvement.

Example objectives may include:

1. improve access and engagement for pupils with SEND and SEMH needs;
2. reduce incidents of discriminatory language;
3. increase pupil understanding of respect, consent and healthy relationships;
4. improve attendance for pupils facing disadvantage or anxiety;
5. ensure all pupils have safe access to physical activity regardless of ability, confidence or background;
6. improve pupil voice in placement reviews and support planning;
7. ensure staff receive annual safeguarding, SEND and equality training.

Equality objectives will be reviewed at least annually.

23. Marketing, Images and Publicity

Combat Classroom will ensure marketing and publicity are respectful, inclusive and safeguarding-aware.

Before using pupil images, videos, testimonials or case studies, Combat Classroom will ensure:

- appropriate consent has been obtained;
- safeguarding risks have been considered;
- pupils are not exploited or identifiable inappropriately;
- language is respectful and non-stigmatising;
- images do not reinforce stereotypes;
- pupils are not presented negatively because of exclusion, SEND, poverty or vulnerability.

Pupils must never be pressured to appear in marketing materials.

24. Complaints and Concerns

Pupils, parents/carers, staff, placing schools or local authorities may raise concerns about discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation, reasonable adjustments or unfair treatment.

Concerns should be raised with:

1. the pupil's key staff member or tutor;
2. the Equality Lead;
3. the Director;
4. the Designated Safeguarding Lead, where there is a safeguarding concern;
5. the placing school or local authority, where appropriate.

Formal complaints will be handled through Combat Classroom's Complaints Policy.

Safeguarding concerns will always be managed through the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

25. Breaches of this Policy

Breaches of this policy may include:

- discriminatory language;
- bullying or harassment;
- failure to make agreed reasonable adjustments;
- victimising someone for reporting a concern;
- staff failing to challenge known discrimination;
- excluding pupils unfairly from learning or physical activity;
- using stereotypes or degrading language;
- sharing offensive material online;

- unsafe or discriminatory conduct in sport sessions.

Breaches by pupils will be addressed through the Behaviour Policy, restorative practice and safeguarding procedures where required.

Breaches by staff may be addressed through supervision, training, disciplinary procedures, safer recruitment procedures or referral to external agencies where appropriate.

26. Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
 - SEND and Reasonable Adjustments Policy;
 - Behaviour Policy;
 - Anti-Bullying Policy;
 - Attendance Policy;
 - Referral, Placement and Exit Policy;
 - Health and Safety Policy;
 - Physical Intervention and Reasonable Force Policy;
 - Online Safety Policy;
 - Staff Code of Conduct;
 - Safer Recruitment Policy;
 - Data Protection Policy;
 - Complaints Policy;
 - Free School Meals and Food Provision Policy;
 - Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy.
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27. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- legislation or guidance changes;
- Combat Classroom's provision model changes;
- commissioner requirements change;
- an equality-related serious incident occurs;
- feedback identifies gaps;
- monitoring shows unequal outcomes for a group of pupils;
- safeguarding, SEND or behaviour reviews identify a need for change.

Approved by: Josh Dean
Role: Director
Signature: J Dean
Date: 30.07.2026

Appendix 1: Equality Incident Examples

Equality-related incidents may include:

- racist language or behaviour;
- sexist comments or harassment;
- homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language;
- ableist insults;
- mocking a pupil's learning difficulty;
- making fun of poverty, clothing, family background or care status;
- religious discrimination;
- targeting a pupil because of disability or SEND;
- sexual comments or unwanted attention;
- online abuse or sharing offensive content;
- repeated exclusion of a pupil from group activity;
- discriminatory "banter";
- refusal to work with someone because of identity or background.

All incidents must be recorded and reported to the appropriate lead.

Appendix 2: Equality Incident Response Process

When an equality-related incident occurs, staff should:

1. intervene calmly and safely;
2. stop the harmful behaviour or language;
3. support the pupil who has been harmed;
4. explain why the behaviour or language is unacceptable;
5. record the incident;
6. report to the Equality Lead, DSL or senior leader;
7. inform the placing school and parent/carers where appropriate;

8. consider whether safeguarding procedures are required;
 9. agree consequences or restorative work;
 10. review whether further support, education or risk assessment is needed.
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Appendix 3: Equality Monitoring Questions

Combat Classroom should regularly ask:

1. Are all pupils accessing the full curriculum?
 2. Are any pupils missing sessions because of unmet need?
 3. Are reasonable adjustments being applied consistently?
 4. Are behaviour incidents higher for any group?
 5. Are attendance concerns linked to SEND, poverty, anxiety, transport or discrimination?
 6. Are pupils safe in classroom, gym, changing and online spaces?
 7. Are staff challenging discriminatory language consistently?
 8. Do pupils feel respected and listened to?
 9. Do parents/carers and placing schools understand the support in place?
 10. Are any changes needed to staffing, training, resources or environment?
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Appendix 4: Example Equality Objectives for Combat Classroom

Combat Classroom will review and adapt its equality objectives annually. Example objectives include:

Objective	Action	Evidence
Reduce discriminatory language	Staff challenge and record incidents consistently; pupils complete respect and relationships learning	Incident logs, pupil voice, behaviour reviews
Improve access for pupils with SEND	Use support plans and reasonable adjustments for all pupils with identified needs	SEND plans, review notes, attendance

Improve safe participation in MMA and fitness

Adapt physical activity for ability, confidence, medical needs and SEND

Risk assessments, session observations, pupil feedback

Improve attendance for disadvantaged pupils

Identify barriers such as transport, anxiety, food or family difficulty

Attendance data, review meetings, school feedback

Strengthen pupil voice

Include pupil views in reviews, mentoring and support planning

Pupil voice forms, mentoring notes

Improve staff confidence

Provide annual training on EDI, safeguarding, SEND and behaviour

Training records, supervision notes