



**Education
Partnership
Trust**

Creating outstanding schools
which transform learning, lives
and communities

EQUALITY INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES

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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to all aspects of the Education Partnership Trust (“The Trust”) and its schools. The Trust will promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination with particular regard to protected characteristics as outlined by the Equalities Act 2010.

The Trust is committed to promoting fairness and equality in everything that it does, acknowledging the diversity of the people who make up our communities. Equality involves a fair environment in which everyone can participate and is given the opportunity to achieve. Diversity recognises and values differences between individuals and groups to create a positive and inclusive culture for the benefit of our schools.

The Trust believes that every individual within our schools has the right to be treated fairly and with dignity, understanding, tolerance, and respect and to be in an environment free from abuse, offensive behaviour, prejudice and unfair discrimination.

In seeking to eliminate direct or indirect unfair discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment, the Trust and its schools will actively promote policies and procedures aimed at realising the full potential of every individual. The Trust will endeavor to maximise resources to ensure that opportunities are open to all.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and protects people from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives

The PSED is a duty on public bodies to consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work and covers the following ‘protected characteristics’:

- Age (not applicable with regard to learners)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion/belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Trust aims to meet its obligations under the ‘General Duty’ of the PSED by having ‘due regard’ to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Having ‘due regard’ means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications.

The ‘Specific Equality Duty’ assists public bodies in responding to the ‘General Duty’. There are two specific duties that public bodies are required to carry out:

- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objective.
- Publish information to demonstrate how the Trust is complying with the PSED.

3. DELIVERING ON THE DUTY

Through this policy the Trust will develop, consult on, set and publish 'Equality Objectives'. All Trust schools will adopt this policy and all school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

The Trust will publish and 'Equalities Statement' to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty.

Schools will report annually to the Trust on the operation and effectiveness of this policy and in particular on the actions taken to ensure achievement of the Equality Objectives.

To fulfil the duty to have 'due regard' to equality considerations, schools must, whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, give thought to equality implications. This means that:

- Decision makers in our schools must be aware of this duty when making a decision and assess whether it may have particular implications for people with particular protected characteristics
- Schools must consider the equality implications before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions, and should keep them under continuous review.

Each Governing Body will ensure that their school complies with the appropriate legislation by ensuring policy and any related procedures are implemented. They will scrutinise the school's approach to equalities to ensure both the general and specific duties under the PSED are fully complied with.

The Headteacher will implement this policy and any related procedures, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities.

The Headteacher has responsibility to ensure the school's commitment to equality is reflected in:

- The attitudes and behaviour of staff
- Arranging appropriate training
- Their willingness to acknowledge and tackle examples of unacceptable behaviour

4. ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act and receive regular refresher training.

5. ADVANCING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the Trust aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)

- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

6. FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

The Trust aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute.
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

7. EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS IN DECISION-MAKING

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

8. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

This policy is supported by Equality Objectives, fulfilling our 'Specific Equality Duty'. These objectives are reviewed every four years in line with this policy.

Objective 1:

To raise awareness of equality and diversity through training and development delivered by the Trust to all staff and governors.

Objective 2: *To close gaps in attainment and achievement between students and all groups of students; especially boys and girls, students eligible for free-school meals, students with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and students from different heritage groups.*

Why we have chosen this objective: It is incredibly important to us as a school that every child achieves their full potential, irrespective of group, gender, whether they are eligible for FSM, SEND, from different heritage groups or CLA.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Closely track and monitor groups at a number of levels, from class teacher to SLT, ensuring that, where gaps are evident, intervention is put in place and further monitoring continues to ensure those gaps are closed in line with national.

Progress we are making towards this objective: In progress (continual objective)

Objective 3: *To reduce the incidents of the use of homophobic, sexist and racist language by students in the school.*

Why we have chosen this objective: Although the use of homophobic, sexist and racist language is minimal, we want it to be reduced even further to ensure that all students are aware that this language is inappropriate and why it is inappropriate.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Deliver training to staff and students through drop-down days, personal development, curriculum time and staff training. Through tracking of incidents to ensure the number of incidents is decreasing and through information, restorative meetings should this language be used.

Progress we are making towards this objective: In progress

Objective 4: *Train all members of staff and governors involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and non-discrimination by the beginning of the next academic year. Training evaluation data will show that 100% of those attending have a good understanding of the legal requirements.*

Why we have chosen this objective: It is vital that all involved in recruitment have either face-to-face or online Safer Recruitment training as well as equal opportunities to ensure that staff involved have a good understanding of the legal requirements.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Identify which staff this is likely to apply to, source training and log and track when training is done, ensuring the training record is kept up to date.

Progress we are making towards this objective: In progress

Objective 5: *Include the 'Two Ticks' positive about people with disabilities symbol on all job adverts, application forms and information by December 2020, to help address the under-representation of people with disabilities in the school workforce.*

Why we have chosen this objective: It is vital that potential staff recognize that we are passionate about addressing the under-representation of people with disabilities in the school workforce.

To achieve this objective we plan to: Include the 'Two Ticks' positive about people with disabilities symbol on all job adverts, application forms and information by December 2020.

Progress we are making towards this objective: In progress

Objective 6: *To monitor and promote the involvement of all groups of students in the extra-curricular life of the school, including leadership opportunities, especially students with special educational needs.*

Why we have chosen this objective: It is important to us that all groups of students are involved in the extracurricular life of the school and are able to access these opportunities.

To achieve this objective we plan to: Ensure that all clubs are accessible and are promoted with all groups of students as well as ensuring this is tracked and monitored, with intervention taking place when needed.

Progress we are making towards this objective: In progress.

9. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout all Trust schools.

The Trust will monitor the operation and effectiveness of arrangements referred to in this policy at each school.

The Trust will review this policy every four years in consultation with each school.